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No. 970 ⁵⁸⁵²

MAY 2, 1924

Price 8 Cents

FAME & FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF
BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN;
OR, THE ADVENTURES OF A SMART BOY.

By A SELF MADE MAN AND OTHER STORIES



The masked men were taken completely by surprise when Bob Ford suddenly appeared at the cellar window and turned a jet of boiling hot water full upon them, peppering them and the fire they had started with equal impartiality.

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FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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NEW YORK, MAY 2, 1924

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Through Thick and Thin

OR, THE ADVENTURES OF A SMART BOY

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—Cast on the World.

"Where have yer been all day?" asked Mr. Maddox, taking his pipe from his mouth and regarding with an ugly frown a bright-looking but poorly dressed boy of fifteen who had just entered the shabby room where the man was sitting with his dirty shoes perched upon the sill of one of the windows overlooking the river which ran past the busy town of Factoryville.

"Looking for work," replied Bob Ford, rather doggedly, for he had little respect for the man who stood in the relation of a half-uncle to him.

"Lookin' for work!" sneered William Maddox, in a nasty tone, habitual with him when he was out of humor, which was about four-fifths of the time. "Yer alwuz lookin' for it, but yer don't seem to find it. Yer don't want to find it," roared the man with an oath, smiting the arm of his chair. "If yer did yer'd find it soon enough. I'll bet I could find work in five minutes if I wuz to try. Ye're a lazy, good-for-nothin' kid, that's what yer are!"

The boy looked at the great husky man in the chair, and wondered why he didn't go to work himself if he thought it was so easy to find something to do that would bring in the money so sadly needed in the Maddox home. No one, however, could accuse Mr. Maddox of hurting himself with hard work. Once upon a time he had been a fairly industrious mechanic—that was when he married Susan Gray, a half-sister of Bob's mother, and before he made the unpleasant discovery that the world wasn't giving him a square deal.

Owing to a strike for higher wages and shorter hours, which in the end was unsuccessful, Maddox, six years before the opening of our story, had lost his position in the shop where he was employed.

That was six years ago. Mr. Maddox soon used up all his savings, and then he and his wife began to slip down the toboggan toward absolute poverty. How they managed to exist after the first year of this experience no one outside of themselves knew. Four years elapsed, and they still managed to keep the roof of the shabby little cottage over their heads. Then something hap-

pened that gave them a slight lift in the world. Bob Ford's mother, his only surviving parent, died, and the boy was thrown upon the world at his thirteenth year. When this news reached the ears of Mr. Maddox a brilliant idea occurred to him. He would offer the shelter of his home at Factoryville to the lad, see to it that he got work in town, and then he and his wife would enjoy the fruits of their philanthropy. It was a great scheme, and it worked very nicely for two years. Now, however, a second strike had demoralized the industrial conditions of the town, and this was followed by a lockout on the part of the factory and shop-owners, so that there was scarcely any work to be got in Factoryville these days. And these conditions had been in force for several weeks. Mr. Maddox didn't relish the situation for a cent, because his young breadwinner had been thrown out with the others. As there wasn't a lazy bone in Bob's body, and because he felt a great sympathy for the unhappy lot of his mother's half-sister, tied as she was to a man who made life miserable for her, he tried hard to get work. Because he couldn't get work to speak of, Mr. Maddox vented a portion of his ugly humor on the boy, and Bob, who didn't consider himself under any obligations whatever to him, was getting tired of being browbeaten.

"I said yer wuz a lazy, good-for-nothin' kid, d'ye understand?" snarled Maddox, blowing a cloud of smoke from his mouth.

"I heard you," replied Bob, starting for the little kitchen in the rear of the house, where he guessed he would find his Aunt Susan, as he called her.

"Yer heard me, did yer?" snorted the man, dropping his feet to the floor and wheeling his chair about. "Where yer goin'?"

"To the kitchen."

"Well, there ain't no call for yer to go in the kitchen. Them as don't earn their vict'als in this house ain't got no right to eat."

"I guess I've earned more than I ever got here," retorted Bob, defiantly.

"What's that?" demanded Mr. Maddox, furiously.

Bob saw that Maddox was in an especially bad humor and apparently looking for trouble, so he

made no reply, but opened the door and entered the kitchen. A plate and a coup and saucer stood on the kitchen table in readiness for him when he appeared.

"Well, Aunt Susan," said Bob, "I haven't had any better luck to-day than usual. I tried hard to get some work at Wade & Butcher's but——"

"You're a liar!" roared Mr. Maddox, now making his appearance with a countenance as dark as a black squall. "Yer ain't tried to get nothin'. Yer don't want to work. Yer want to live off of me. Well, I won't have it. I told yer this mornin' that if yer didn't get somethin' to do to-day yer could get out."

"Now, William," protested his wife, in a conciliatory tone, "Bob has tried, I am quite sure——"

"Shut up!" snarled Mr. Maddox. "What do you know about it? Did yer follow him around to see what he was doin' with himself all day? Of course yer didn't. He ain't done but three or four days' work in six weeks. That's enough to show me that he doesn't want work, and I've got no use for anybody that won't work."

"I am sure he would be glad to work if he could get it."

"He can get it fast enough if he'd look for it. But he hangs around strike headquarters, listenin' to them tom-fool speakers, and expects he'll get fed when he comes home. Well, I won't stand for it—see? This is my house, Mrs. Maddox, and I'm goin' to run it to suit myself. I won't have no loafers around it, so you'd better get yer duds together and hook it right away, Bob Ford, or I'll freshen your way with the toe of my boot, d'ye understand?"

Bob had stood enough. Going upstairs to put his few things together, he then left the cottage.

CHAPTER II.—A Gallant Rescue.

Bob hadn't the slightest idea where he should go. The world was before him, but it looked like a very cold and unfriendly place at that moment.

He walked away from the cottage at random, not toward the heart of the town, but away from it, and soon was on the river road. The river road was kept in fine condition: great shade trees rose at intervals along the bank, where the soft, luxuriant grass was kept short by the regular application of a mower, and private docks extended out into the water for the accommodation of boats. From one of these docks, as Bob approached, a small row-boat put off with a little girl in the stern, and a boy of twelve at the oars. The child was exquisitely dressed in a white frock with a pink sash about her waist. Bob soon saw that the boy had very little knowledge of boats, for he handed the oars awkwardly and caught more than one "crab" in his efforts to propel the boat forward. The little girl laughed at him frequently, as if she thought his exertions very funny indeed. From the expression of the boy's face Bob judged that her mirth jarred upon his feelings. At any rate, he seemed to be doing his best to make the boat go. Suddenly he lost his balance by missing the water with the blades of both oars and tumbled backward into the bottom of the boat. One of the oars escaped his

grasp, and began to float away, while the blade of the other rose shining into the air. The girl clapped her hands with glee, and her silvery laugh rippled along the shore.

The boy quickly recovered his seat, and then made a grab for the truant oar. The light boat dipped suddenly. As the little girl had bent over to watch him pick up the oar, she was thrown off her balance and fell with a splash into the water.

Bob Ford sprang to his feet, rushed down the bank and out on the wharf. As he did so a shriek from behind told him that another spectator had witnessed the accident. The child's sister, a lovely girl of thirteen, had been standing at the gate of the fence which surrounded a spacious, well-kept grounds in the center of which stood a splendid mansion, watching the two younger people in some little anxiety, as the boat receded from the shore.

She rushed frantically toward the wharf, calling upon the startled boy, whom she addressed as Freddy, to save her sister Edith. But Freddy was utterly unequal to the emergency. He simply sat like a graven image and watched his late companion rise to the surface a yard away, struggle for a moment or two, and then sink for the second time. Bob, satisfied that the little girl would be drowned unless he was able to reach her in time, threw off his hat, jacket and shoes and sprang into the water. He was a splendid swimmer, fortunately, and cut through the water like a fish. He reached her just as the water was closing over her unconscious form for the third time. Grasping her firmly by one arm, he struck out for the shore with the other. The girl on the wharf watched their approach with a tearful, earnest gaze, her hands clasped prayerfully across her breast. Bob urged himself through the water as though it was his natural element. He held the child's face well above the surface, so that there was no danger of water entering through her half-parted lips. In this way he soon reached the beach formation of the bank, and when his feet touched bottom he gathered the little girl in his arms and walked ashore. Her sister flew to his side as he ascended to the road.

"My darling sister!" she cried, the tears streaming from her beautiful eyes. "Don't say she is dead! Don't, please! Oh, she is so white and still! What will mamma and papa say?"

"She wrung her hands in a paroxysm of grief."

"Your sister isn't dead, miss," replied Bob, soothingly. "She'll be all right in a little while. I reached her just in time."

"You are a brave boy!" cried the elder girl fervently. "You have saved my sister. I shall love you as long as I live," she added impulsively.

Their approach was observed from the veranda of the mansion, and some commotion ensued there at once. A bare-headed lady, clad in a pink summer gown, sprang down the steps, followed by a fine-looking gentleman, and rushed to meet them.

"Myrtle, what has happened to Edith? Heavens, what has happened to her?" cried the lady, her face suddenly going white as she saw her youngest child lying still and pale and dripping in the boy's arms. "Oh, Father of Mercy, she has been in the water! My darling! My darling!" she cried hysterically, as she snatched Edith from

Bob. "Look up and speak to mamma. Speak to me or I shall go mad!"

"Don't worry, ma'am," said Bob. "She'll come around all right. Carry her into the house, undress her, and give her a good rubbing."

The well-nigh distracted mother rushed away with her child, paying no attention to her husband, who tried to relieve her of her burden. He followed in his anxiety, and so did the child's sister, leaving Bob to himself.

Bob returned to the wharf for his things just in time to see a boat from another dock put out to the rescue of Freddy, who could do nothing at all with one oar, and but for this timely assistance must have gone floating down the river. While Bob was watching the rescue of Master Freddie, he was hailed from behind by a man's voice. He turned around and saw a person, who proved to be the gardener of the place, shouting and beckoning to him. Bob made his way to the gate.

"Mr. Hastings wishes to see you," said the man, opening the gate.

"All right!" replied the boy. "But I'm all wet. I should like a chance to dry my clothes."

"You'll have plenty of chance to do that, young man, before you leave here, I'm thinking. You saved Miss Edith's life, and you'll find that Mr. Hastings will do the right thing by you."

"I don't know as I have done more than my duty. You don't suppose that I was going to look on and see that little girl drown before my eyes when I can swim like a fish, do you?"

"I suppose not. Still, some people would think twice over the matter. Here comes Mr. Hastings. I will leave you to introduce yourself."

CHAPTER III.—Bob Lands in Easy Street.

Mr. Warren Hastings, who now came forward with gratitude in his heart to greet Bob Ford, was the most prominent business man in Factoryville.

He took Bob by both hands and shook them warmly.

"You have placed me under an obligation that I never can repay, my lad. You have saved the life of our little Edith. I want to know your name first of all, and then you must remove your wet clothes so that they can be dried."

"My name is Robert Ford."

"You live in Factoryville, or in the immediate neighborhood, I suppose?"

"I did live in town until an hour ago."

"Until an hour ago? You were leaving the neighborhood, then, to go elsewhere?"

"Yes, sir."

"Your father and mother——"

"Both are dead."

"With whom were you living?"

"My mother's half-sister."

"Were you working at one of the mills before they shut down?"

"Yes, sir."

"At which one, may I ask?"

"At the Empire State."

"Ah! My own mill, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"And I presume lack of work is the cause of your leaving your home?"

"It is one of the reasons—probably the chief one."

"Come with me and I will talk with you further after you have taken off your damp clothes. You have had your supper, I suppose?"

"No, sir. I have had nothing to eat since this morning."

"You astonish me. Then you shall have your dinner with us. I think I will be able to fit you out temporarily with some clothes. My gardener has a son of about your age."

Mr. Hastings rang for a servant and gave him certain orders. In a short time he returned with a bundle of clothes to the room into which the owner of the mansion had introduced Bob.

"Now, my lad, take off your sodden garments and put on these."

Bob hastened to do so.

"Now, Robert, do you care to tell me your reasons for not wishing to return to town?"

"Well, sir, I am sorry to say that it is on account of my Aunt Susan's husband, Mr. Maddox. This evening he ordered me out of his cottage, though my aunt begged him to let me stay."

Bob further explained the character of the man he had been living with since he came to Factoryville, and told Mr. Hastings how sorry he was that his Aunt Susan was bound for life to such a disreputable person.

"It is certainly a very sad case, but I do not think hers is the only example of the kind in Factoryville. Now, Robert, I should not feel easy unless I did something for you. You must let me testify my gratitude in some substantial way. You are rather young to embark upon the world on your own resources. Let me give you a nominal situation on my grounds here, say as assistant to my gardener, and then when the High School opens in town you shall attend it. You will continue to live on these premises, and attend to such odd jobs as your time will permit of. What do you say?"

Bob was delighted with this proposal, and eagerly accepted it, much to the satisfaction of Mr. Hastings; but unfortunately for Bob events soon transpired which broke up this pleasing arrangement. As soon as he was dressed Mr. Hastings took him downstairs and presented him to his wife and daughter Myrtle, who both praised his bravery and presence of mind in warm terms, and fittingly expressed the gratitude they felt toward him for saving the life of their little Edith. Bob dined with the family that evening, and proved himself a very bright and entertaining guest. He was assigned to a neat spare room in the loft over the stable and carriage-house where the coachman and footman slept, and next morning was put in the gardener's charge.

That afternoon Mr. Hastings sent out to him an excellent working suit, and a fine best suit, together with an ample supply of underwear, and such other things as he would naturally require.

Bob found his new position in life very satisfactory. In addition to the outfit of clothes and other necessary articles furnished the boy by Mr. Hastings, he was also the recipient of an elegant little gold watch and chain presented by Mrs. Hastings, and two handsome and valuable scarf-pins from Edith and Myrtle respectively.

CHAPTER IV.—Bob Overhears a Plot.

Bob had been a week at the Hastings home when he decided he would pay a visit to his Aunt Susan, and let her know about his good luck. He chose his hour for calling soon after dark, when Mr. Maddox was accustomed to go to a neighboring saloon to pass some time in the society of congenial spirits. As he approached the cottage whose roof had sheltered him for the last two years he saw Mr. Maddox come out of the door, walk down the road a short distance, and then turn up a side street.

The nearest saloon was two blocks away in that direction, and so Bob was satisfied the coast would be clear for a couple of hours at least. He advanced boldly up the little yard to the kitchen door and knocked. Mrs. Maddox answered the summons and was both surprised and delighted to see Bob standing there on the step. She drew him inside, kissed him, and after bolting the door, led him into the meagerly-furnished sitting-room.

"Mr. Maddox has been like a bear since you went away," said the patient little woman, putting the corner of her apron to her eyes. "He is very angry with you, and swears that if he ever meets you again he will half kill you."

"It wouldn't be healthy for him to touch me now. I can tell you that, Aunt Sue. I've got friends who would make it pretty hot for him if he laid his hands on me."

"Why, Bob, what do you mean? Tell me what has occurred since you left us a week ago."

"That's what I came here for, auntie. You will be surprised to learn that I am now living about a mile from here, on the river road, at the home of Mr. Warren Hastings, president of the Empire State Woolen Mills."

"Is that possible?" exclaimed his aunt, in great astonishment.

"Yes, auntie; and this is how it happened."

Whereupon Bob gave his only relative a faithful account of his adventure that night on the river which led up to the establishment of such satisfactory relations between himself and the Hastings family.

"I am glad you have been so fortunate, Bob," said Mrs. Maddox, in a tone which left no doubt as to the sincerity of her words.

At that moment the knob of the kitchen door was rattled violently, and then several heavy thumps came upon it.

"My gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Maddox, all of a tremble. "That is my husband. He mustn't find you here. I don't know what brought him back so soon."

"Maybe he wants something and will go away again."

"Then you had better get into that closet, and I will try and get him out again as soon as I can."

"All right, auntie," replied the boy, retreating to the closet in question.

The thumping on the kitchen door was repeated with more persistence and vigor, showing that Mr. Maddox was evidently growing impatient at the delay.

"Why didn't yer let me in at once?" demanded Mr. Maddox, when his wife opened the door.

"I came as soon as I could," replied the little woman, with a look of uneasiness when she found that her husband was accompanied with a visitor.

"Then go upstairs and go to bed," growled the boss of the cottage in a surly tone, pushing her ahead of him.

"But I am not through with my work yet," she protested.

"Whether you're through or not I don't want yer around—d'ye understand?" he said, in a threatening tone.

How to get the boy out of the house without her husband's knowledge was a serious problem to her.

"Well, why don't yer go when I tell you?" roared Mr. Maddox, more ugly than ever.

"I'm going," she answered, meekly.

"Then go," he said, roughly, as they entered the sitting-room, giving her a rude push toward the little hallway.

"If I ketch yer listenin' to what we're sayin' down here I'll be the death of yer," he snarled, slamming the door in her face. "That's what a feller is up ag'in when he's tied to a female," he growled to his companion. "Take a seat, Jim, and make yerself comfortable. I'll make some hot water, and we'll have a toddy," he added, taking a black bottle and placing it upon the table.

Then he went into the kitchen, filled the tea kettle, and put it on the stove to boil, adding some chips of wood to the almost extinguished coals, and fanning them into a blaze. While the water was heating he got a couple of tumblers and the sugar bowl.

"You have a cozy place here, Bill," remarked his companion, looking around the room whose only virtue was extreme cleanliness.

"Cozy be jiggered. It would be all right if I had the money to fit it up like it used to be. That's the fault of them blamed sharks that are always takin' the bread out of the workin' people's mouths."

"Ain't that what I've always said, Bill?" said his associate, complacently.

"Sure yer have. We might have won that strike six years ago if the fools hadn't give in to the bosses. Well, what did they get by it? Ain't they had to strike ag'in? Now they can't go back, 'cause the bosses have locked 'em out. Serve 'em right for a parcel of mealy-mouthed donkeys."

In a moment or two he went into the kitchen and returned with the steaming kettle. Then he poured out a liberal allowance of liquor into each glass, added some hot water and sugar, and stirred the compound.

"Here's lookin' at yer, Bill," said Jim, crooking his elbow.

"Same to you, Jim Rolfe," answered Mr. Maddox, swallowing the contents of his glass.

"Now, let's get down to bus'ness," said Rolfe.

"Go ahead. I'll listen to you," he said, as he took up the bottle.

"Yer see, somethin' has got to be done to scare the bosses of the factories. The buildin's themselves are too well guarded for the committee to take any chances. So it's been arranged to de-

stroy some of them fine residences down the road."

"Well," said Mr. Maddox, pushing the second whisky toward his companion, "how is it to be done, and who's goin' to take the risk a-doin' it?"

"It kin be done easily enough," nodded Rolfe, taking a gulp of liquor.

"How?"

Rolfe winked one eye sagaciously.

"I'll tell yer if yer agree to stand in with me and help," he said.

"Me help? What for?"

"For the good of the cause," grinned Rolfe.

"Blow the cause! What do I care about it, anyway? I ain't been shut out. The cause didn't do me any good six years ago when I lost my job."

"But if there's money in it, too?" suggested his companion, with another wink.

"How much?"

"Three hundred dollars if we burn down the Hastings house, to begin with."

"Who's going to pay it?"

"The committee."

"What committee?"

"Oh, a certain committee, of course."

"How do you know that?"

"I'm on the inside, and I know all about the matter. It's on the quiet, as a matter of course. It wouldn't do for such a thing as this to leak out among the people, 'cause we don't know who might turn traitor for the sake of makin' some-thing by warnin' the bosses."

"That's right," nodded Maddox.

"I promised to see to it that the good work is started. I can't do it alone, so as you're an old chum of mine I selected you. I believe I kin trust yer."

"Of course you kin."

"I know \$150 would come handy to you."

"Bet yer life it would. I ain't seen that much money in years."

"Then you'll go in with me?"

"I will, if it's safe."

"It's as safe as anythin' can be."

"Well, let's hear the partic'lars," said Mr. Maddox, starting to mix the third hot whisky.

"What then? Why, we'll start a nice little fire that'll soon spread all over the cellar, and after it gets good headway the house will go up like a tinder-box?"

"But them cellars are stone, ain't they?"

"What of it? The roofs are wood, and the Hastings cellar I know is full of boxes and barrels that'll burn first-class. They keep a tank of herosene down there, too. We can draw off the oil and soak the stuff well with it, then a match and some paper will do the rest. We couldn't make \$300 easier if we tried."

"It looks rather risky. S'pose we wuz to get caught?"

"We mustn't suppose any such thing. If we go to work about the matter right we won't get caught."

Mr. Maddox, however, had his doubts, though they were rather weakened by the whisky he had drunk, which had also instilled a false kind of courage into his veins. Jim Rolfe was a specious talker, and he easily met every argument advanced by his associate, and went several points better, so that he finally convinced Maddox, who was hot after the \$150, that they had an open-and-shut game before them.

It was ten o'clock by the time the two rascals finally came to an agreement to carry out their plans that night some time after midnight. And during it all Bob Ford stood like a statue in the closet, an interested listener to the plot and all the details thereof. The disclosure had certainly startled him very much more, especially as Mr. Maddox was connected with it.

Maddox and his friend Rolfe being now of one mind on the project of burning down the home of Warren Hastings that night, they finished the whisky, which seemed to have no more effect on them than so much water, put on their hats, and prepared to leave the house.

Maddox was to accompany Rolfe home so that the latter could get the tools he needed for the enterprise; then they were to make their way at their leisure to the scene of operations, and put the scheme into force some time after midnight, at which hour they judged the coast would be clear for them to work without discovery. As soon as the two men left the house, Bob came out of the closet.

Mrs. Maddox, who had been waiting and watching upstairs for her husband and his companion to leave the house—with her heart in her mouth less some incautious movement on Bob's part should betray his presence in the closet—hastened down as soon as she heard the kitchen door bang.

"Oh, Bob," she exclaimed, when she entered the sitting-room and saw the boy seated in the chair recently vacated by Mr. Maddox. "How ever did you manage to stand it so long in that closet? They were in the house over two hours. I was in constant fear that my husband might discover your presence."

"I stood it all right, Aunt Sue. As Mr. Maddox seemed to have no occasion to go to the closet, why, I was in no particular danger of discovery."

Bob only stayed a few minutes longer at the cottage, as he was anxious to get back and tell Mr. Hastings what was on the tapis. On reach-

CHAPTER V.—Mr. Maddox and His Friend Rolfe Find Themselves in Hot Water.

"Ever since the scheme of gettin' back at some of these money-bags was brought up and figgered on by the committee I've been hangin' around them fine houses tryin' to see how the game could be worked, for I wanted to get my flukes on that there money myself."

Maddox nodded and sipped his toddy.

"I've got into the grounds one way or another. Once on a grocery waggin, ag'in on a waggin that fetched some cases of champagne—any old way, in fact, that I could. I kept my weather-eye liftin', you kin believe, when I got there, and I've discovered how we kin get into the cellar of two or three of the houses. The Hastings cellar is the easiest of the lot, for it's got a big window that ought to be as easy as piecrust to force."

"Well, if we get in, what then?"

ing the house, however, he found only the gardener stirring around the premises. The family had retired for the night, as had also the servants. The gardener told him that Mr. Hastings had received a telegram from New York, and had taken a late train for the metropolis.

"That's too bad," said Bob, scratching his head.

"Too bad! Why, what do you mean?" asked the surprised gardener.

"The fact is he ought to be here to-night. An attempt is going to be made to burn this house."

"My gracious! Tell me about it."

Bob, without mentioning names or stating where he had been concealed, gave the facts as he knew them to the gardener.

"This looks like a serious piece of business," said the man.

"It is serious."

"Then the police must be notified. There is a telephone in Mr. Hastings' library."

"I think you, I, the coachman, and the footman can manage these rascals without calling in the police. Now, my plan is this: You three will conceal yourselves in the cellar, in readiness to rush upon them when I give the signal. We'll leave the cellar window unfastened so they can get inside. My idea is to catch them in the act of setting the place on fire. I'll have the hose in readiness for instant action. I'm going to attach it to the hot-water boiler in the washroom, which is right over the window. At the right moment I'll let them have a dose of the scalding stuff. That will throw them into confusion. Then you three can rush out and secure them before they can recover themselves."

"That's a fine idea," grinned the gardener. "It will be just the thing. Give them a good scalding while you're about it. It will be a lesson to them, and the police will attend to their case afterward."

Bob and the gardener went to the coach-house and stable, awoke the coachman and footman, who slept in the rooms adjoining Bob's, and they were soon in possession of all the particulars of the plot to burn the mansion and the boy's scheme to outwit them. Both of the men were tickled with Bob's plan, and immediately agreed to do their part to put it into successful execution. So Bob got out the hose.

One end was attached to the boiler in the washroom, and the rest of it was coiled inside under the window, so that all Bob had to do was to get in at the window, which was left unlocked, throw out the hose, turn on the hot water, dash open the cellar window, and play upon the rascals. By the time these arrangements had been made it was close on to midnight.

Accordingly the three men let themselves into the cellar through the door, and Bob took up a commanding position in the shadow of the carriage house. An hour passed away on leaden wings, and Bob was beginning to wonder whether Maddox and his pal had given up their scheme for that night, when two shadows suddenly appeared in the yard.

"They're here at last," muttered the boy, his nerves beginning to tingle with excitement.

The shadows advanced noiselessly toward the cellar window, the location of which Rolfe had made himself acquainted with. The rascals came

to a pause before it; Rolfe knelt down and tried it. He uttered an exclamation of satisfaction when he found that it was not fastened. This ought to have struck him as rather a suspicious circumstance, or an instance of gross carelessness on the part of the servants.

However, neither of the rascals stopped to consider the matter at all, so eager were they to get inside. Bob saw them both disappear within, and close the window after themselves. After waiting a few moments to give them time to look around and get started on their crooked game, Bob ran lightly over to the window, pulled it open a trifle, and looked down into the cellar. Rolfe and Maddox, now disguised by masks, had lighted a candle, and were moving about the place, examining the interior. The boy began to fear that they might discover the presence of the gardener and his two companions.

In order to be prepared for emergencies, he brought a short ladder under the washroom window, mounted it, threw up the window softly, got inside, and lowered the hose outside. Then he took another peek at the rascals. Maddox was piling paper around a pair of empty flour barrels, not far from the window, while Rolfe was drawing a quart measure of oil from the metal tank containing the kerosene.

Rolfe poured the oil over the paper and barrels, and then refilled the can. He distributed the oil over all the wooden boxes and other inflammable material in the cellar. All being in readiness, the rascal knelt down, and with the candle flame lighted the paper, which at once burst into a ruddy flame, throwing out a considerable quantity of smoke. As the tiny jets of fire began to creep up the outside barrel Bob concluded it was high time for him to act. He dashed up the ladder into the washroom, turned on the boiling water, and then hurried back to the cellar window.

Throwing it open with a whoop that would have put an Indian to shame he stepped in on a packing case which stood under it, and dragged the nozzle of the hose after him. The masked men were taken completely by surprise when Bob Ford suddenly appeared at the window and turned a jet of boiling hot water full upon them, peppering them and the fire they had started with equal impartiality.

While they were thus thrown into complete confusion, the gardener and his companions issued from the place of concealment and dashed upon them. Their capture was so easy as to be almost ludicrous, and while the men were tying their discomfited prisoners, Bob, by a well-directed stream, soon put the fire out altogether.

CHAPTER VI.—Abducted.

By the time the fire was out the hose had become a pretty hard proposition for Bob to handle, as the boiling water passing through had heated it almost red hot, so the boy was mighty glad to drop it, scurry up the ladder, and turn off the flow at the boiler. When he came down the ladder, after closing the window, he found the gardener and his companions had marched the

two rascals up out of the cellar. Their arms were tightly bound behind their backs, their masks were off, and they looked the picture of hard luck.

Maddox had not yet recognized Bob, as his senses had been in such a state of confusion and dismay at the unexpected conclusion of the enterprise in which he was engaged; but when the coachman brought a lantern and held it up so that the faces of the whole party were more or less illuminated, the shiftless husband of Mrs. Sue Maddox uttered an exclamation of dismay as his eyes rested on the face of the boy he had thrown out upon the world a week previous.

"I see you know me, Mr. Maddox," said Bob, in a cold tone. "I am sorry to see you engaged in an affair that is likely to land you in the State prison for many years."

"What are you doing here?" cried the rascal, in an ugly voice.

"Considering that I belong on these premises, there is nothing surprising in the fact that you see me here."

"What do you mean by that?" snarled Maddox.

"I mean that I'm one of Mr. Hastings' employees."

Maddox uttered an oath and then was silent. In ten minutes the entire party started for the town. They didn't take the River road, but the street above. There were no lights along the street until they struck the town proper, then the gleam of the gas-lamps threw a fitful, watery look around at half-block intervals. Not a solitary pedestrian was met until they got well into Factoryville, and within a few blocks of the station. Finally the red and green lamp that glowed above police headquarters came into sight, and they drove up to the door and stopped.

The prisoners were yanked out of the wagon with very little ceremony, and marched into the station, where they were handed over to the police on the charge of incendiarism. Bob and the others told their stories, promised to appear next day at the examination in the magistrate's court, and then drove back home, while the prisoners were locked up for the night in cells below the sidewalk. The morning newspapers had an account of the affair, and when the prisoners were called to the bar at ten o'clock the court was jammed with spectators, the strikers of the mills predominating.

On the evidence given by Bob and his fellow employees in the Hastings' service Mr. Maddox and his pal Rolfe were held for trial. After the proceedings were over, Bob called on his Aunt Sue, told her the whole story of her husband's rascality, and sympathized with her the best he could.

"I don't blame you, Bob," she sobbed. "But it's dreadful to think that William is in jail on so serious a charge, which will probably send him to the penitentiary."

Bob did all he could to comfort her, and soon afterward took his leave. When Mr. Hastings returned from New York he was much astonished to learn about the bold attempt made to destroy his house. He thanked Bob and his allies of that night for the services they had rendered him, and

at the boy's earnest request he promised to assist Mrs. Maddox. As a further evidence of his gratitude he presented the brave boy with a check for \$500 which Bob placed to his credit in a savings bank, and he gave each of his other three employees \$100 each.

Mr. Hastings publicly announced his intention of prosecuting to the full extent of the law the two rascals who had tried to burn his house. He also became very active in probing the complicity of the committee, whom Bob's evidence implicated in the affair. The committee being thus personally interested in the outcome of the trial of Maddox and Rolfe, which was set down for the first week in September, decided to secretly assist the two men.

So they hired lawyers in a roundabout way, and privately voted funds for the defense of the prisoners. As Bob Ford was the principal witness for the prosecution the committee resolved that the boy must be spirited out of the neighborhood before the trial. Two men were selected to carry out this purpose. They were sworn to secrecy, and promised \$500 each if they successfully accomplished this design.

With the persistency of the redskin of old following a trail, these two men kept a keen eye on Bob's movements, ever on the alert for a favorable opportunity to carry out the mandate of the organization. One evening a man appeared on the Hastings grounds and asked to see Bob. The boy was hunted up and notified about the visitor. The man was standing just inside the gate opening on the back street. Bob didn't recognize him, and asked what he wanted.

"Mrs. Maddox has met with a serious accident, and she sent me here to bring you to her."

"What kind of an accident?" asked the boy, in great concern.

"Well, her clothes caught fire at the stove this evenin' when she was cookin' her supper, and if it hadn't been that I was just passin' the house she might have been burned to death," replied the man glibly.

Bob believed his story and said he would accompany him to his aunt's cottage. He left word where he was going, and the cause that called him away, and then started off with the man. They had proceeded perhaps a quarter of a mile along the street, which was always lonesome in that neighborhood after nightfall, when another man approached them and asked for a match. Bob's companion said he had none, and turned to the boy.

As Bob began to search his pockets for a lucifer he was suddenly seized and overthrown by the two men. A gag was thrust into his mouth, and his arms bound behind his back. A light wagon which had been standing at the junction of a side street was now driven up by one of the men. There was a long, covered box in it.

Bob was lifted into the wagon, the cover of the box was taken off, the boy deposited inside, and the cover, which was perforated with a dozen auger holes, was replaced and screwed down by four screws. Then the wagon was driven up the street in a direction which would take it away from Factoryville.

CHAPTER VII.—Down the River.

The wagon kept steadily along the road for several hours, the driver and his companion talking earnestly together, and occasionally filling their pipes and smoking. It was after eleven o'clock when they entered the outskirts of a good-sized town, located, like Factoryville, on the river. The men drove down to one of the wharves, at that hour silent and deserted, at the end of which lay a small schooner loaded with shingles. Her hold was quite full, and bundles of the shingles were stacked in a double row on either side of her deck.

The stops were off her sails, and the upper booms raised a foot or two, showing that she was on the eve of sailing. The wagon was evidently expected, for a couple of men stepped ashore and approached the vehicle to lend a hand in getting the box on board the schooner. The driver and his companion, however, took the job upon themselves of transferring the box to the vessel, and placing it on deck between the two masts where they were directed to put it. Flasks of liquor were produced by the men who came with the box, and all hands drank in turn until the contents of the flasks were exhausted. About this time the captain came on deck and had a short conversation with one of the newcomers, who finally passed him a \$50 bill.

The master of the schooner then looked over the vessel's side, and announced that it was time to get under way. It was an hour or more before the boy recovered his senses. As he lay in his narrow quarters, gazing up at the starry heavens, he wondered where he was and what had happened to him. At length he remembered how he had been assaulted and made a prisoner by two men he never remembered having seen before in his life.

He had an indistinct recollection of being driven off in a wagon after the men had placed him in a box, and now as his eyes rested on the broad sail above his head, felt the motion of the vessel, and heard the faint hum of the wind on the sail, he knew he was on a fore-and-aft craft of some kind which was bearing him either up or down the river. Presently the face of the guardian of the box looked down at him.

"So you've come to your senses, have you?" said a gruff voice.

Bob studied the man's features in the darkness as well as he could before he opened his mouth, and was satisfied this was the man who had called at the Hastings place and told him, what was evidently a false story, that his aunt had met with an accident, and had sent him to bring him to her.

"What is the meaning of this outrage?" the boy asked at length.

The man blew a whiff of smoke from his lips, and made no reply.

"What are you going to do with me?"

"I'm not going to hurt you if you remain quiet."

"Where are you taking me?"

"Down the river."

"What for?"

"Because you're not wanted in Factoryville any longer."

Bob saw there wasn't any information to be gotten out of the man who had assisted in his capture, and was now evidently in charge of him, so he said nothing more. At that moment eight bells were sounded.

"Do you want me to gag you again?" asked the man, leaning down and speaking in a hoarse whisper.

"No," replied the boy.

"Will you promise not to make any disturbance while the helm is being relieved?"

"I promise," replied Bob, seeing there was no help for it.

"All right. I'll take your word," said the man.

He took up the cover of the box, and placed it in position on top of the box, shutting the boy in again. Then he took his seat on top of it once more and waited. A sailor came out of the fore-castle, exchanged a word with him as he passed, and went to the wheel. The man who had been at the helm since the schooner left her wharf at midnight passed him in the other direction going forward to turn in. The fellow in charge of the box then lifted off the cover again.

"Now you can swallow all the air you want till four bells—that is six o'clock. I twill be daylight then, and I'll have to screw you up once more till I get you ashore."

Bob, however, lulled by the splash of the river against the schooner's sides, fell asleep in half an hour, and when he came to his senses again the cover was on the box, and the light of morning was filtering through the auger holes.

CHAPTER VIII.—A New York Den.

An hour or two passed very monotonously to the boy, who employed the time in trying to conjecture the reason for his abduction from Factoryville. Finally he arrived at the conclusion that some friends of Maddox and Rolfe had taken this means to remove the most important witness for the prosecution. The schooner arrived within sight of Manhattan Island about noon. Another hour or more was consumed in sailing down the west shore of the island, rounding the Battery, and working her way up the East River to the wharf where she was to make fast to. It was about three o'clock when Bob felt the box in which he was confined lifted with some care and carried from the schooner to the dock, where it was loaded on an express wagon.

The vehicle started off at once, turned into South street, and was driven for some distance with several turnings until it came to a halt in an obscure neighborhood that was not regarded with much respect by the police. The box was lifted out of the wagon and carried under a low archway, with a strong-smelling grog-shop on one side, and a still more odorant old clothes' shop on the other.

Up the brick-paved and filthy lane, turning now to the right and then to the left, the box was conveyed until the bearers reached an old, half-dilapidated house, through the doorless entrance of which they passed and took their way down

a long, reeking hallway until they arrived at a closed door. The guardian of the box, who was in front, knocked in a peculiar way on the resonant panel, and after a delay of some minutes the door was unbarred, unlocked and thrown open. A cadaverous, hollow-eyed and unshaven man of sinister aspect received them, and motioned to a spot on the floor for them to lay down the box.

"I thought yer'd given up yer plan," he grinned, when the door closed behind the expressman, and he had secured it once more against the intrusion of unwelcome visitors. "Yer were so long puttin' it into execution."

"Last night was the first chance we got for puttin' our hooks onto the kid," explained the man who had charge of the box.

"Better late than never, Weaver," replied the sardonic one. "Help yerself to a drink," and he pointed to a bottle which stood on the dirty table.

The man addressed as Weaver did not require a second invitation to make free with the villainous compound which went by the name of whisky in that locality.

"I'll let the boy out now," he said, smacking his lips over the dram. "He's a stout young fellow, and I've taken the cords off his arms that we bound him with at first, but I guess we can handle him all right if he tries to cut up any didos."

"This will settle him if he acts ugly," said the cadaverous man, pulling a slung-shot out of his hip pocket. "Now yer kin take off the lid."

Weaver unscrewed the cover and threw it off.

"You can get out now, young feller, and stretch yerself, but I warn you not to get too gay or somethin' might happen you wouldn't like."

Bob took advantage of this permission to get out of the box and look around. He found himself in a small, dirty and sparsely furnished room, the only window of which looked out on a miserable narrow space which could not possibly be called either a yard nor an alley, and was closed in by the walls of adjacent buildings whose height shut out every vestige of sunlight, and only admitted a kind of twilight at midday. Then he turned and looked at the cadaverous scamp who presided over the room to which he had been brought, and the look of cunning and crime which was stamped on his hard features did not tend to reassure the boy.

"Yer'll know me when yer see me ag'in, I s'pose," grinned the rascal, as he observed the penetrating look of the boy. "Since yer have come here to lodge for a while, I dare say yer would like to see yer bedroom, eh?"

This ghastly bit of humor seemed to afford the two men much enjoyment, for they chuckled over it with much zest before the cadaverous man walked over to a door in the wall and threw it open.

"There's yer chamber. If it ain't so well as what yer'd find at the Waldorf-Astoria, it's better'n some places I know of. Come here and look at it."

"I'm not curious to inspect it," said Bob, shortly.

"Oh, yer ain't, eh? Think it ain't good enough for yer! Been used to better!" snarled the cadaverous rascal. "If you try to put on any airs with me I'll twist yer neck for yer—d'ye understand?"

He spoke so savagely that Bob experienced a shiver of dread for the future.

"Now get in there, and stay there till I let yer out," continued the fellow, with an oath, seizing the boy by the arm and pushing him forward into the dark hole, which was not much larger than a good-sized closet.

Bob heard a key turned in the lock after the door had closed behind him, and he knew he was a prisoner in the place. He pulled his match-safe from his pocket, and cautiously struck a light in order to discover what sort of place he was in. It was a box-like room about four feet by six. The walls, ceiling and floor were black with grime. A dirty mattress and filthy blanket occupied the greater part of the floor space. There was also a rickety stool on which stood a candlestick with a bit of candle stuck in it, and covered with grease and blue mold. The confined atmosphere reeked with a combination of vile odors such as the boy had never smelt before, and which almost turned his stomach.

The match expired in his fingers, leaving him once more in the dark. He could hear the two men talking in the other room, and he put his ear to a crack in the door and tried to make out what they were saying. They spoke too low, however, for him to distinguish more than a word here and there.

He could see them as they sat about the table helping themselves to the contents of the bottle. Finally the man who had brought the box pulled a couple of bills from his vest pocket and handed them to the cadaverous ruffian. The fellow received them with a grunt of satisfaction, and stowed them away somewhere in his clothes. Then the men got up, put on their hats, and after the occupant of the premises had unbarred the door, they went out together.

CHAPTER IX.—Sent to Sea.

"I wonder what's going to be the end of this thing?" Bob asked himself, as he removed the candlestick and seated himself on the stool. "I don't think I could be in a much worse scrape. I have been brought to some low den, in a vile neighborhood of New York, for a purpose. Now, what can that purpose be?"

Bob racked his brains in vain for a plausible answer to that question, but he could not think of a satisfactory one. The day passed drearily enough for the boy, who was locked up in his little den every time his jailer went out or had visitors. It was growing once more when the cadaverous rascal brought Bob his supper and released him from the dismal inner room to eat it. This time, instead of cold food and water, a tray of cheap restaurant food with a cup of hot coffee stood on the table awaiting the boy. Bob was hungry enough to eat almost anything, and when the man told him to pitch in and eat his fill, he didn't wait to be asked twice. He cleaned up everything in sight, including the coffee, which he thought tasted rather queer, especially the last of it.

Hardly had he finished before a sensation of drowsiness began to steal over him. The feeling was so strange that he tried to throw it off. His efforts to rise from the chair were failures, however. His eyelids felt heavy, and would close in spite of everything he could do to keep them open, while the expression of his face took on a foolish, inert look, very different from the bright, smart expression which usually was seen there. Although the boy didn't seem to realize what was actually the matter with him, the fact of the matter was he had been drugged. Knock-out drops had been conveyed to him in the coffee, and in a very short time he was under the influence of a deadly stupor.

"He's safe enough now," grinned the ruffian, who had been watching the insidious effect of the drug from the start, as Bob's head fell forward on his arms. "He won't come to his senses afore to-morrow mornin', and by that time he'll be a long way from New York. That's what I call makin' easy money."

The rascal smoked on till he finished his pipe, then he put on his hat and left the room. About midnight he returned with a low-browed cab driver, whose vehicle was standing near the curb in front of the archway. Between them they carried the insensible boy to the street and lifted him into the cab.

The ruffian got in also, while the cabman mounted to his seat and drove away. The vehicle finally turned into South street and then kept on straight ahead till it came to a wharf not far from South Ferry. Here a boat was in waiting, manned by several sailors.

In the bottom lay three drunken seamen with their dunnage beside them. Bob was stowed into a convenient space, and then the boat pushed off from the landing and was soon lost in the gloom of the night. Just beyond the far entrance to Buttermilk Channel a weather-beaten brig lay at anchor.

She had cleared that afternoon for Kingston, Jamaica, with an assorted cargo, much of it according to her manifest of a valuable character, and in consequence heavily insured. She would sail with the first flood tide—that was about two o'clock. The boat containing Bob Ford and the three drunken sailors as passengers came alongside this vessel about one o'clock in the morning. The hoisting tackle from a pair of vacant davits was attached to her, and she was lifted to her place just above the bulwarks and secured. The four unconscious persons on board of her were taken in the fore-castle and dropped into separate bunks to come to their sense at their leisure.

At half-past one the captain came aboard, and half an hour later the tide turned. Just on the stroke of two a tug came alongside, made fast, and waited till the brig's anchor had broken ground. As soon as the anchor was clear of the bottom the tug gave a couple of screeches, and started for the Narrows with the brig in tow. An hour later, with all plain sail set, the brig Eudora was heading out to sea, while below in the fore-castle Bob Ford lay like a log, utterly oblivious to the change which was taking place in his surroundings.

CHAPTER X.—What Bob Found Himself Up Against on the Eudora.

Shortly after six o'clock the chief mate of the brig Eudora went into the fore-castle to rouse up the four hands who had been brought aboard in an unconscious condition before the vessel sailed. The brig was now many miles at sea, entirely out of sight of land, and bowling along southward under a smacking wind. Two of the three seamen were still so drunk that the mate let them lie where they were, and turned his attention to Bob Ford, who was now beginning to recover from his stupor. A lively shaking brought the boy to his senses and the realization that something new and strange had happened to him over-night.

"Tumble out, you lubber, and get on deck, d'ye hear?" roared the chief mate of the Eudora, yanking Bob unceremoniously out of the bunk on to the deck of the fore-castle.

The boy's head struck on the hard boards, and he saw numberless stars. It woke him up to the fact that something was doing, however.

"Why, what's the matter? Where am I?" he blurted out, as he noticed how different were his surroundings to those of his last recollection.

The mate twisted his fingers into the collar of his jacket and pulled him to his feet.

"On deck with you, or I'll knock the daylights out of you!" he cried, in a menacing tone.

"On deck!" gasped Bob, in a puzzled tone. "Why, what do you mean?"

"That's what I mean," exclaimed the mate, snatching up a piece of rope and belaboring the boy's back and shoulders.

Bob tried to escape the punishment by dodging, but his foot caught in a cleat and he pitched forward on his face. The mate swooped down on him and laid the rope unsparingly all over his body.

"Get up, you young monkey, or I'll cut you into ribbons!" he shouted.

Bob scrambled to his feet, and in his efforts to get away from the instrument of torture he ran against the short ladder leading to the fore-castle deck. Running up this, he found himself in the open air, on the deck of a vessel, with nothing around him but water and the over-arching sky.

"Good gracious!" as the truth dawned upon his brain. "I'm out at sea!"

The mate followed him on deck.

"Now, you lubber, get busy!" he roared.

"I'm not a sailor," protested the disheartened boy.

"Oh, you ain't, eh? Then what did you ship aboard this brig for?" the mate glared.

"I didn't ship. I don't know how it is I am here."

With a snarl of rage the chief mate raised the rope to bring it down on Bob's already raw and tingling back, when the second mate came up and said:

"The cap'n wants that boy sent aft."

The chief mate paused with the rope's end in the air. He looked aft and saw the skipper of the brig on the poop looking toward them.

"All right," he growled. "Take him along. I'll attend to him later on."

So Bob was hustled along the deck, past the morning watch, who eyed the boy with curious glances, for they detected the land-lubber in his every move, and was finally pushed up the poop ladder into the presence of the captain. Jabez Green, the master of the Eudora, was a big, stockily built man, who had been at sea from his youth up, serving in every capacity from green hand to his present exalted situation.

His was not a pleasant face to look upon, for it told its own story of harshness and an ungovernable temper. He was a man that was not to be trifled with. The top of his head looked like a mop of a brick-red hue, while his countenance was as thickly over-run with hair of the same color as the face of a Skye-terrier—and neither showed the civilizing influence of either comb or brush.

Where the skin showed on his low forehead, and in small patches under his heavy-set eyes, it was tanned to the color of mahogany, while his nose was swollen and covered with rum-blossoms. Altogether he was a formidable-looking man, even when at peace with himself.

As a rule, however, he made Rome howl when he was on deck, and when below his constant companion was a pot-bellied stone jug of Holland gin. Captain Greene looked Bob over from head to foot in a way that made the boy shiver in spite of his natural courage. He put Bob in mind of an ogre he had once read about in a fairy story when he was very young.

"So you're the young imp Mulligan sent aboard, eh?"

Bob hadn't the least idea who Mulligan was, though as a matter of fact Mulligan was the cadaverous ruffian to whose tender mercies Weaver had resigned him the day he brought the lad to New York. As Bob was ignorant of Mulligan's identity, he said nothing. The captain accepted his silence as a token of assent.

"You're a greenhorn, good for nothing but to feed to the sharks," he grinned fiendishly. "You're no better than a stowaway, and when I catch one of them on board my ship I make 'em wish they were dead a thousand times a day, d'ye understand?"

Bob looked the skipper, whom he rightly judged to be a tyrant, straight in the eye, and as this was a new sensation for the man, he ripped out a fearful oath and raised his huge, hairy fist in a threatening manner.

"Don't look at me in that way, you scum of the sea! Do you know I could kill you for sassin' me with your eyes, and nothin' would be said about it?"

Bob was willing to believe that Captain Green was equal to any outrage that a ruffianly nature might suggest, so not wishing to aggravate the man further, he looked down on the deck.

"Since you're no good as a sailor," went on the skipper, "you can't expect to earn any wages. As long as you're aboard this brig you'll want to eat, of course. Then you'll have to earn your food."

"I'm willing to make myself useful in any way now that I'm here, but I didn't come here of my own accord."

"Who the thunder cares whether you came of your own accord or not? You're here, an' you've

got to work, whether you're willin' or not. As you're good for nothin' else you must help the steward and keep the cabin shipshape, d'ye understand?"

Bob understood.

"Now go below and report to the steward, and if you don't do things right up to the handle, I'll mash your head in with a belayin'-pin."

Captain Green raised his foot and made a kick at Bob to hasten his retreat. The boy, however, was too quick for him and darted for the ladder. As the skipper had calculated on boosting him along, thus furnishing himself with entertainment that jibed well with his ugly nature, and had consequently put a good deal of force into his leg, he came to grief, for his foot, meeting with no resistance, carried his leg into the air, and this overbalanced his body, and he came down sprawling on the deck with a force that seemed to shake the brig.

With a roar like a mad bull he scrambled to his feet and glared around for the boy who had been the cause of his mishap. He was furious enough at that moment to have killed Bob on the spot. Bob, however, was out of sight. The captain's rage was diverted from him by seeing a grin on the face of one of the sailors below. He leaped forward at a bound and, rushing at the seaman, dealt him a blow with his ponderous fist that stretched him bleeding and unconscious on the deck.

"You'll laugh at me, will you?" he roared, giving his victim a kick in the ribs. "Get up, or——"

Then he saw that the sailor was senseless. He thereupon looked around for some one else on whom to vent his temper, but the watch had prudently scattered, and he had to give up his amiable intention. Fortunately for Bob, who was now in the galley, he had forgotten all about him, and so the boy escaped that time.

CHAPTER XI.—What Bob Overheard in the Storeroom.

The steward was a dark-skinned, snaky-looking little man of Hindu origin, who had sailed several voyages with Captain Green. He was about the only person on board the Eudora who wasn't afraid of the skipper. Apparently the captain had already spoken to him about Bob, for he made no remark when the boy told him he had been sent to him to be put to work. He pointed to the plates and other dishes in their racks, the knives and forks in a covered box, and then told the boy to set the cabin table. Bob hastened to do it in the best shape he knew how, and when he returned to the pantry the steward asked him his name.

"Bob Ford."

"My name Singh Small," said the steward, showing a glittering row of perfectly white teeth. "S'pose cap'n bulldoze you, tell me. I no stand for it."

Bob looked at his lithe, sinewy figure, his perfectly formed hands, as small as a woman's, and he wondered what show he would stand against the burly skipper if the latter once got his hands

on him. Jabez Green, however, never attempted to monkey with his steward. He would curse everybody else in the brig, from the chief mate down, when his temper was upset, but he never swore at Singh Small.

The steward attended strictly to his business, and when he was through he would sit in the pantry and smoke a peculiar-shaped pipe. In a short time the cook came aft with the cabin breakfast, and the skipper and his chief mate went down to eat. Bob stood around and waited on them. When they had finished the captain went to his stateroom, and the first mate went on deck and relieved the second mate, who came to the table and had his meal.

Bob carried the dirty dishes to the galley, and then he and Singh Small partook of their breakfast in the pantry. Bob helped the steward for a while, and was then sent to tidy things up in the cabin. Later on the steward showed the boy where the vessel's stores were kept in a small space aft between decks, entrance to which was through a trap-door. After dinner Captain Green ordered Bob to black his boots, so the boy got the necessary materials, and set to work. When his shoes shone like a new silver dollar, he made Bob bring him the jug of gin from his private locker, take down a glass from the swinging tray under the skylight and fetch out his box of strong cigars.

"Now tell Mr. Ruggles that I want to see him," the skipper said, meaning his chief mate, "and don't you come in here no more till I send for you."

Bob delivered the message, and then retired to the pantry to scour up the knives and attend to such other work as the steward laid out for him to do. Although our hero had never been out of sight of land in his life before, there was little danger of his experiencing any of the unpleasant sensations of seasickness as long as the weather continued as fine as it was at present. There were two berths in the little room off the pantry where the steward slept, and Singh Small told the boy to take possession of the upper one. Several days passed in this manner, the weather still holding fine and the brig sailing on a slight angle to the leeward.

Bob ascertained that the Eudora was bound for Kingston, Jamaica, direct, and would pass through the Windward Passage. He was pleased to know that he was not fated to undergo a long foreign voyage of many months' duration, and confidently expected that he would soon be able to return to the United States. Next day the weather turned dirty, and in the choppy sea which the brig ran into Bob got his first acquaintance with seasickness. For the ensuing thirty-six hours he was a very miserable boy. The captain would have made it a good deal more unpleasant for him but for the steward, who had a few words to say on the subject, with the result that Bob was not interfered with.

Captain Green had it in for him, though, as the boy judged from the unpleasant reception he got from the skipper the moment he was able to resume his duties in the cabin. But Bob had determined not to talk back to the great mogul of the brig under any circumstances, so he took his medicine and said nothing about it even to Singh

Small, who seemed to be the only friend he had on board.

The captain and chief mate both handled him without gloves from that time on, though they didn't actually hurt him in any way. One afternoon when the brig was in the neighborhood of the Bahama Islands the steward sent Bob into the storeroom for some canned goods that he wanted for supper. He took one of the ship's lanterns, opened the trap-door, went down, and closed it after him. He had hardly started to hunt for the case he was in search of when the light began to grow dim, presently sputtered and went out altogether, leaving him in the darkness.

"I must have taken a lantern that hadn't any oil in it," muttered Bob. "I'll have to go back and fill it."

At that moment, however, the trap, some feet away, was lifted, and a pair of legs, followed by a long body, appeared through the opening and dropped into the storeroom.

"Come on," said the newcomer, in the voice of the chief mate, as he moved out of the way.

Another pair of legs and a chunky body came down, and the skipper of the brig dropped in the lazaretto.

"Close the trap," said Ruggles, shortly.

The captain closed it. Bob had no wish for those two men to discover him down there, notwithstanding that he had business in the storeroom. He feared personal violence at their hands, for they couldn't have a better chance to attack him than in that closed space. So he shrank back behind a pile of cases and almost held his breath.

"What did you bring me down here for, Ruggles?" demanded the skipper, in an ungracious tone.

"Because I wanted to talk to you without fear of being overheard."

"Oh, you did," snarled the captain, with an oath. "It must be something mighty particular you have to say."

"It is."

"Well, spit it out quick. I don't care to stay in this hole any longer than I can help."

"I want to ask you a question or two," said the mate, in a pointed tone.

"Go on."

"This brig and her cargo are heavily insured, aren't they?"

"What business is that of yours?" roared Captain Green, with a savage oath.

"It's my idea they are. It is also my idea that the Eudora is not expected by her owners to reach port this trip."

With a roar like a mad bull the captain made a spring at his mate, but the man evidently expected some such demonstration, for he sprang aside in the dark and easily evaded the skipper. Captain Green swore like a trooper, and groped around trying to locate his companion, but the attempt was fruitless. He soon exhausted himself, as the mate surmised he would, and came to a halt.

"It won't do you any good to have a run-in with me," spoke up the mate coolly. "I'm on to the whole game, so we might just as well come to an understanding as not."

The captain shot off another volley of oaths.

"I'll tell you how I came to tumble to the business. I had charge, as you know, of the loading of the brig. Some of the most valuable of the cargo, according to the bills of lading, are stowed amidship. One day I accidentally discovered that one of these cases contained nothing of more importance than old bits of broken iron. I didn't know what to make of the matter, but I am not a fool, and concluded to look further. My investigations showed me that every one of those cases, supposed to contain high-priced machinery, held nothing but useless truck. I was satisfied there was some deep game in the wind. I kept my eyes skinned, and found numerous other instances of grave discrepancies between what the manifest showed and what the cargo actually was. I said nothing about it at the time. A still tongue makes a wise head. I determined to keep my own counsel until I had sounded you. A man who gets full of gin like you do is easy game. He lets out many things he ought not to. Well, you have told me enough since we left port to put me next to the game."

Captain Green uttered a round oath. Ruggles laughed irritatingly.

"What's the use of cutting up rusty with me, Cap'n Green? Nobody on the brig but you and I has any suspicion of the true state of affairs. I'm ready to stand in with you on this thing. You're going to get a round sum for running this brig ashore on one of the small sandy keys of the Bahamas, where she'll go to pieces under the first gale that sweeps these seas. I'll help you do it, and shut my eyes to the transaction, for one-third of what you are to get; but you must deal fairly with me, or I'll blow the whole thing as sure as my name is Jim Ruggles."

There was a short silence, and Bob heard the captain breathing heavily at the foot of the steps that led out of the storeroom. Evidently he was loth to come to any agreement with his officer, and yet he could not help seeing that the mate had him cornered, and that there wasn't any hole he could squeeze out at.

"Well, cap'n, is it a bargain? You know you can't carry this scheme out without I stand in with you. And you know you can't land your cargo at Kingston and escape detection. You're up against it any way you may look at it."

"I s'pose I'll have to agree," muttered Captain Green. "But it's ag'in me to do it."

"I'm to have an honest third of your share, am I?"

"Yes; and in return you agree to help me put the game through?"

"I'll do that willingly," replied the mate, in an exultant tone.

"Then it's a bargain. Give me your hand on it."

The two men came together, and shook hands over their criminal arrangement.

"My plan was to scuttle the brig within easy reach of Cat Island, or Watling's. The Eudora is an old vessel, and who could say that the recent spell of dirty weather we had might not have sprung a plank in her bottom?"

"That's right," grinned Ruggles.

"After the water gained a good headway the pumps would not be able to save her, especially if it was found they were out of order."

"Quite correct," agreed the mate.

"Then she'd go to the bottom, and all evidence as to the true character of her cargo would be lost."

"That plan is much safer than running the brig ashore, which I couldn't very well have accomplished with you and Mr. Bruce alternately on deck every night in charge of the vessel's course."

"That's true. But now that I'm with you it would be a simple matter to put her ashore on one of the smaller keys if you want to do so."

"But I don't want to do so. I want to put her out of sight altogether, so that there will not be the remotest chance of any evidence turning up to queer the game of the owners, who rely upon me to see them through safely."

"Well, you are the doctor, and I stand ready to give you a helping hand in any way you may direct," said the mate.

"I certainly look to you to do your share of the work, as I have promised you a third of the profits."

"As I attended to the loading of the greater part of the brig's cargo, I don't see how you propose to get at the vessel's bottom so as to bore the holes necessary to accomplish your purpose."

"All that was provided for before a ton of cargo was put into the brig," said the captain with a chuckle.

"In what way?" asked the mate, in an interested tone.

"A dozen auger holes were partly bored through the bottom planks at different places along the run, and were then plugged to guard against an accidental leakage. There is sufficient space in the run between the planking overhead which supports the first tier of freight and the keel for a man of my build to crawl comfortably. I had a trap cut in the flooring of this storeroom, and a ladder built communicating with the run close to the rudder-post, so that I could enter the hold at any time without any one aboard becoming the wiser of the fact. I had calculated on making my first trip down there to-night, when I expected to finish the boring of the holes, replugging them as I proceeded. When all were finished I meant to knock the plugs out one after the other, and make my escape back to the cabin. It would be some time before the brig's condition would be noticed in this weather. By that time I believed the water would have made such progress that with the demoralized condition of the pumps the vessel could not be saved. At the proper moment I would abandon the brig to her fate, and in a short time she would go to the bottom."

"Your scheme is a first-class one," said the mate.

"It couldn't be better. Now, since I have had to take you into my confidence, I will turn the manual labor of finishing the borings and the final

CHAPTER XII.—Caught.

"Now," said the chief mate, "since we're hand-in-glove in this affair, tell me what scheme you have in view for losing the brig. I s'pose you mean to run her ashore on one of the low sandy keys hereabouts, don't you?"

removing the plugs over to you. We will go down into the hold now, with a lantern which is hanging ready for business in yonder corner, and you can inspect the work that has been partially accomplished and figure upon what remains to be done to finish the job. When the first watch comes on duty and Mr. Bruce takes charge of the deck, you can then go into the hold and attend to the work, notifying me as soon as you have finished it. We will then complete our arrangements for abandoning the brig."

"All right," agreed the chief mate.

The captain struck a match, and the glare disclosed a lantern hanging near the trap-door. He took it down and lit it. Then he removed several small cases from one side of the storeroom, knelt down, and feeling about on the floor seized a small brass ring in his fingers and pulled up a trap-door, disclosing a black void underneath. Beckoning to Ruggles, the captain flashed the light of the lantern down into the depths, and the mate saw the upper part of the ladder which led to the keel near the rudder post.

"The auger is at the foot of this ladder," said the skipper. "Follow me."

He swung the lantern over his arm and started to descend, when a tremendous crash a few feet away startled them both, the captain almost losing his balance on the top rung of the ladder. Recovering himself with a strong effort he raised the lantern on high, and then the two men saw Bob Ford standing in the midst of the wreck of a pile of overturned cases of stores, his white face gazing at them with a look of mingled horror and fear.

Bob had been so overcome by the discovery of the villainous design contemplated by Captain Green and his chief mate that in the confusion and excitement of his feelings he had leaned too hard against the pile of boxes, and they had suddenly toppled over and thus disclosed his presence in the storeroom at a most unfortunate moment for his own safety. With a terrible oath the skipper sprang at the boy, followed by the somewhat unnerved mate.

"What are you doing down here, you infernal young scoundrel?" he roared fiercely.

"I came down to get some canned goods for supper," blurted out Bob, thoroughly dismayed by the pickle he found himself in.

"And how long have you been here, eh?" demanded the captain, violently.

Bob did not know what reply to make to this question, so he remained silent.

"How long, you jackanapes?" thundered the skipper, with a malevolent gleam in his eyes.

"He must have been down here when we came," said the mate, hoarsely, "and he's heard everything that passed between us."

"You were down here when we came, weren't you?" snarled Captain Green, with a menacing shake of his head.

"Yes," admitted Bob, who scorned to tell a lie, even if such a subterfuge would have availed him any.

"Then you heard every word of our conversation?"

"Yes," answered Bob, doggedly.

The two men looked at each other, and wiped the perspiration from their foreheads. Evidently

they were up against it hard, and the thought simultaneously occurred to both that the only way out of the difficulty was to silence the witness before he got a chance to spread the news throughout the brig.

"We can't let him get away," said Ruggles, "or the game will be up with us."

"When you saw us come down here why didn't you show yourself, instead of hiding behind those cases and listening to all we said?" demanded the skipper, in an ugly tone. "Who told you to spy on our movements, eh?"

"I was afraid to let you know I was here for fear you would attack me, as you have been in the habit of doing without any provocation at all."

"It would have been a deal better for you had you made your presence here known to us at the start-off; now we've got to take measures to protect ourselves against your tongue. You know too much for our good. You know our plans and purposes, and if we were to let you escape from here you'd put the brig's company up to what's going to happen, and we'd be in no end of trouble. Since you chose to put your head into the lion's mouth, you've got to suffer the consequences. Grab him, Ruggles!"

The chief mate darted upon the boy and seized him, while Captain Green, after putting the lantern down on one of the overturned boxes, picked up a coil of thin rope and prepared to take a hand in the proceedings himself. Bob put up a stout resistance, but he was no match for the two men. They bound him hand and foot, and then glowered down upon his helplessness.

"You know that we intend to scuttle the brig, don't you?" said the captain.

Bob made no reply.

"You're welcome to the knowledge, for we mean that it shan't do you any good. We're going to take you down to the bottom of the hold with us, bind you to the lower rungs of the ladder, and leave you to go down with the vessel some hours hence—d'ye understand?" spoke up the skipper, with vindictive earnestness.

Bob hardly realized at that moment the awful doom to which these men proposed to consign him, so confused was his senses in relation to the whole matter. He could scarcely believe that Captain Green and his chief mate were really in earnest about destroying the brig, notwithstanding the confidential nature of the conversation he had so recently overheard.

The whole thing seemed more like an ugly dream than an actual fact. The skipper of the Eudora and his rascally mate, however, were in deadly earnest about the business in hand—both with reference to the sinking of the vessel and the utter wiping out of Bob Ford, who was now so dangerous to their interests. Captain Green took up the lantern again and began to go down the ladder. The mate lowered the helpless boy down to him, and then followed himself, closing the trap after him.

CHAPTER XIII.—Like Rats in a Trap.

The scoundrels and their victim had hardly disappeared from the storeroom when the upper trap was lifted, a dark countenance was thrust down,

and a pair of glittering eyes peered around into the darkness.

"Bob—Bob Ford, where you got yourself to, eh?" asked the voice of Singh Small.

The steward spoke impatiently, and seemed surprised that he got no answer.

"Where can that boy be, I wonder?" he murmured. "He is not here, for he make no answer, and there is no light. Yet he did not come back with the stuff I sent him for. It is not like him to act this way. He is always quick to get what I want. Maybe something happen him. I will see."

The steward went back to the pantry and lit a lantern. With that in his hands he returned to the storeroom to investigate. The first thing he saw was the overturned cases and the lantern Bob had taken from the pantry standing close to them without any light in it.

Then he saw the cases that Captain Green had moved out from the bulkhead to get at the trap-door opening into the hold. Singh Small thought this disarrangement of the stores very strange indeed, for he had been down there that morning, and then everything had been in good order. As nobody but he or Bob was supposed to go to the storeroom he attributed the disorder to the boy, and was rather puzzled to account for it. But the main question that bothered the steward was where had Bob gone to? Singh Small picked up the lantern and looked at it.

It was certainly the one the boy had taken from the pantry. He flashed his own lantern about the storeroom, and finally behind the cases the skipper had moved out. His sharp eyes immediately detected the trap-door. Evidently Bob or somebody else had moved those boxes to get at this trap. Singh Small never let anything get by him.

That trap-door had been put there for some purpose, and the steward was curious to learn what that purpose was. He opened it and looked down. Could Bob have gone down there? If he had, why had he done so, and why hadn't he taken the lantern with him to light his way? Singh Small pondered for a moment over the question, then he decided to go down himself and see what he could find out below.

With the agility of a monkey the steward descended the ladder, carrying his lantern in one hand. Reaching the hold he came with startling suddenness upon Bob Ford, securely bound to the lower rungs. Singh Small flashed the light all over the boy, and uttered an exclamation of astonishment.

"What does this mean, eh? Who done this?"

"Sh!" replied Bob, warningly. "The captain and the chief mate brought me down here and tied me to this ladder. They are now somewhere in the run under the cargo. They are going to scuttle the brig to-night and leave me here to perish with her. Cut me loose, quick, before they come back," he added, eagerly.

"Why they want to scuttle the brig, eh?"

"I'll tell you all about it when we get to the pantry," said Bob, impatient to get free from his desperate situation.

"No, you tell me now," said the steward, his eyes sparkling strangely.

"I'm afraid they'll be back and surprise us before I could tell you the story."

"I no have a knife. You must stay here till I come back by and by. Now tell me why—ah! I hear them. They are coming this way. I must be off. But do not be afraid. I am your friend. I will see that you get free after a while."

With these words Singh Small darted up the ladder and disappeared.

Five minutes later when Ruggles passed the pantry the steward was very busy at his regular duties, but he gave the mate a look out of the corner of his little beady eyes that meant the officer no good. A little later he entered the cabin to set the table himself, and found Captain Greene there with his gin jug.

"You know where that boy Bob is?" he asked the skipper.

The captain shook his head.

"He should be here to set the table. I think he is getting lazy," continued the steward.

Ordinarily the captain would have sworn roundly at the boy, and have ordered Singh Small to send a sailor to look the lad up. Now, however, he hadn't a word to say on the matter, but drank his gin with more than usual relish. Night gradually fell, the lamps in the cabin were lighted by the steward, and supper was served to the captain and his chief mate. Later Ruggles went on deck and relieved the second officer, as was his custom.

Four bells announced the end of the second dog watch at eight o'clock, and then the first watch went on duty, the second mate taking charge of the deck. It was a cloudy night and a stiff breeze hummed through the brig's rigging. The watch below had turned in, and everything was shipshape for the night. Singh Small had cleaned up, put out the pantry light, and had apparently gone to rest, as he was accustomed to do about that hour. But never was the Hindu more wide awake in his life. He had taken his seat in the pantry whence, through a crack in the door, he was able to view the cabin, where the captain was drinking again, and the entrance to the passage, in the floor of which was the trapdoor opening into the store-room.

In a short time the chief mate appeared, spoke a few words to the skipper, and after looking cautiously around to make sure he was not observed, he went into the passage, lifted the trapdoor, and disappeared into the lazaretto.

Singh Small grinned in a way peculiar to himself, and after that watched the captain. That worthy appeared quite contented to replenish his glass from the stone jug every time it became empty, and puffed at his big black cigar as though not a thing in the world troubled him. Two hours passed in this manner, with Singh Small as wide awake as ever. At last four bells, or ten o'clock, was struck by the second mate on deck. Hardly had the sound died away when Ruggles reappeared through the trapdoor in the passage. He came directly to the captain and engaged him in low conversation. In fifteen minutes he retired to his cabin. Captain Green also got up from the table, and taking the jug with him retired to his cabin. The steward made no move for perhaps twenty minutes, then, with a sharp knife in one hand, and a lighted lantern in the other, he glided out into the cabin, listened at the chief mate's

door, then at the captain's, and feeling satisfied there was no fear of immediate interruption from them, he passed like a shadow into the storeroom. He saw that the boxers had been replaced on the trapdoor leading to the hold. He quickly removed them, threw open the trap, and descended into the hold. As the light flashed below him he saw there was all of four feet of water at the foot of the ladder, and that it was nearly up to Bob Ford's arm-pits.

"I had almost given up hope," said the boy, in a hoarse, unnatural tone. "The water has been steadily creeping up about me ever since the chief mate completed his job in the run. The vessel is scuttled and sinking. The pumps have been tampered with, and I guess she's sure to go down in a few hours."

While Bob was speaking Singh Small was hurriedly cutting him loose from the ladder.

"Come," said the steward when the boy was free, "follow me up. We talk in the pantry. Then perhaps we able to do something."

Up darted the Hindu with Bob at his heels, and truly thankful was the boy at having thus escaped the fate designed for him by the captain and the chief mate. But when Singh Small was within a yard of the trap the face of Ruggles suddenly appeared above, glaring down at him, as he swung a lantern over the hole.

"So, Singh Small," he cried, maliciously, "you will butt in where you're not wanted, eh? I suspected you, you smart Aleck of a Hindu, and I have kept my eyes skinned for some move on your part. You're pretty slick, but not slick enough to get the best of me. You've cut the boy loose, I see. Well, you'll have to take a dose of his medicine, too. I've got you both like rats in a trap, and together you'll drown with the other rats in the hold. Good-by to both, and good riddance."

Bang went the cover, and from the noise that succeeded, both Bob and the steward knew that the chief mate was piling the cases back on top of the trap. They were certainly in a desperate situation.

CHAPTER XIV.—Ashore.

Singh Small uttered an exclamation in Hindostanese as the trap was slammed down almost in his face, while Bob Ford, who had easily heard the vindictive words of the chief mate, and realized their import, was thoroughly startled and dismayed by the unexpected turn affairs had taken.

"My gracious!" cried the boy, in a dispirited tone. "What shall we do now?"

The Hindu muttered something unintelligible to Bob, and tried to push up the trap, but the weight of the boxes that Ruggles had placed upon it defeated his efforts. Then he swung the lantern to the right and left of where he stood, as if seeking another outlet from the hole in which they were trapped. He knew that in the upper hold, or 'tweendecks, facing them, a couple of feet of vacant space lay between the top tier of merchandise stowed on that deck and the flooring of the brig's main deck.

His object was to try and make his way with Bob into that space, traverse the top of the cargo

for the entire length of the vessel, and then by knocking against the floor of the fore-castle arouse the attention of the watch below to the fact that there was something in the hold that had no business to be there, and thus cause an investigation that would result in their liberation. Nothing, however, met his eye but the boards of the strong bulkhead which separated them from the main part of the hold.

The prospect, therefore, of escaping the terrible fate allotted to them by Ruggles was far from encouraging. Clinging to a ladder in the semi-darkness of their narrow prison, with the lap of the ever-rising water below sounding in their ears and foreshadowing their doom, was not the pleasantest situation in the world. The groaning and thumping of the rudder within a yard of them sounded preternaturally loud, and the splashing of the water, too, as it struck against the brig's stern outside. Singh Small descended to the depths to take notice how fast the water was accumulating in the hold, and his report on his return aloft was not a cheerful one for poor Bob to hear. Thus two hours passed away, and the hitherto buoyant motion of the brig was now a sluggish roll and pitch, owing to the weight of the water she had taken aboard. A new sound now came to them. It was the grating noise of the pumps which jarred on their ears. The fact that the brig was leaking had come to the attention of the second mate and the watch on deck on the eve of midnight. The pumps, however, worked hard, and did not properly perform their duty. In fact, one of them was found to be completely out of business, while the other worked very badly indeed. So, when eight bells was sounded, which brought the watch below on deck, the other sailors thus relieved made no attempt to go to rest, as the situation was seen to be alarming. The water gained steadily, as the only available pump could not throw out one-half of what was coming in through the dozen holes the chief mate had punched in the vessel's bottom. After an hour's work it seemed to be a foregone conclusion that the brig's doom was sealed.

The chief mate, who now had charge of the deck, told the men to get the boats ready for abandoning the brig. The captain was notified of the condition of the vessel, just as if he hadn't been waiting in the seclusion of his stateroom for the news.

Then he came on deck and began to supervise the arrangements started by his ally. As their course on the chart showed that they were not more than fifty or sixty miles to the eastward of Watling's Island, where there was a settlement at which Captain Green proposed to stop first after abandoning the brig, no apprehension was felt by the sailors that they were placed in any unusual peril by the sinking of their craft. The chief mate let it be generally known that in his opinion the vessel had sprung some of her timbers, which were old, in the late gale, and as the cargo prevented the carpenter from ascertaining just where the injury was and repairing the same, and as the pumps had gone back on them at the critical moment, why, the fate of the brig seemed to be certain.

The crew accepted this view of the situation, as they thought the chief mate ought to know what

he was talking about, and so they went cheerfully to work to water and provision the boats for what was understood to be a short trip to the nearest land.

The men were kept steadily at work at the pumps, and encouraged to do their best, as Captain Green wanted it to subsequently appear that he had done his best to try and save his vessel.

When on consultation with Ruggles the captain was satisfied that the brig would go down within an hour, he gave orders for the men to take to the boats which had been towing alongside for some little time. Each man was permitted to take a small quantity of his belongings with him, and the skipper and his officers also carried with them their most valuable possessions. All being in readiness, the three boats, each in charge of the captain or one of the mates, pushed off and laid their course for Watling's Island. Neither the second mate, nor any of the crew, had remarked the absence of Singh Small, the steward, or Bob Ford, his assistant; or if he had he naturally supposed these two persons were in one of the other boats. At any rate, nothing was said about them, for the captain was the last to leave the brig, and when he gave the order to abandon the fated vessel the inference was that he believed no one had been accidentally left behind. It was his duty, at any rate, to see that all his hands were taken off. And so the boats rowed away to the westward, leaving the brig to pursue her way aimlessly forward until such moment as she could go no further, and the relentless sea claimed her for its prey. And all this time Bob Ford and the Hindu steward were hanging in helpless proximity to approaching death to the ladder in the narrow space between the bulkhead wall of the hold and the rudder sternpost. Their only avenue of exit was blocked above them, and as the movement of the vessel grew more and more sluggish, as the water rose higher and higher in the hold, their spirits sank lower and lower in their breasts, for they believed that the brig's doom was theirs as well. The clang of the pump to which they had been listening for more than two hours ceased at last, and now the only sounds that came to them were the swish of the sea outside against the stern and the rattle of the rudder chains.

"It's all up with us," said Singh Small, breaking a long silence. "The crew must now leave the brig. They no more work the pump. The vessel go down soon. We go, too. All over quick."

Singh Small awaited death with a stolid indifference characteristic of his race. In the boy's mind, however, a score of conflicting emotions ran riot.

He was young and full of life, and death came hard to him. At last, after an hour's interval, even he began to grow indifferent as to when their fate was to overtake them. Thus the Eudora sailed forward under a rising wind which forced her somewhat faster ahead on her erratic course. She sank lower and lower in the sea, but still she managed to keep afloat. At last, as the tropical sun was peeping above the watery horizon, she ran smack upon the sandy shore of a small key—one of the numerous islets of the Bahama group. The shore being low and shelving, she ran upon it for something more than half her length, and then tilted over on her beam ends. The shock of

the vessel coming to a stop nearly shook Bob and the steward from their hold on the ladder. They both thought the end had come as the brig careened over on her port side. There was a tremendous crash above them, as the cases of stores in the lazaretto shifted and fell in a heap on the down side. Then, like the calm that follows a heavy shock of earthquake, the brig lay quite still, and naught was to be heard but the gurgle of the swirling water about the stern. Bob was the first to recover his presence of mind. Clearly some important change had come over the situation. The vessel was quite stationary—showing no further tendency to go forward on her undirected course, nor down into the depths.

"It must mean," thought the boy, with a gleam of hope, "that the brig has run ashore somewhere."

CHAPTER XV.—The Iron-Bound Chest.

The steward realized the meaning of the situation as soon as the stupor cleared from his brain. He had been to sea long enough to know what the listing of the vessel on her beam meant.

"We no sink further at present," he said to the boy. "We ashore on some key—sandy island—plenty of such in this sea. Now if find some way to get out we safe."

"Try the trap again," suggested Bob, eagerly, for the crash he had heard over their heads, together with the slant of the brig away from the trap, gave him the idea that the cases had fallen away from their former position. Singh Small acted upon his word at once, and, sure enough, the trap easily yielded to his hand.

"Good," he cried, exultantly. "We get out."

He clambered through the opening with the lantern hanging to his arm, and then bent down to help Bob out, too. The flash of the light showed that all the stores were piled in great confusion to the port, many of the boxes being broken and their contents scattered around. But the condition of the stores gave them no concern at that moment—their thoughts were bent on getting on deck and seeing where they were. There was little difficulty in accomplishing their exit from the lazaretto, and they soon climbed the brass-bound steps in front of the binnacle, which held the compass, and stood up on the sloping poop-deck, supporting themselves by the spokes of the wheel, with the early breeze playing through their hair and fanning their cheeks. How glorious it was to be free!—free from the darkness and terrors of their late prison house.

The Eudora had poked her nose high and dry on the sand of the key, and then rolled over to port, as if exhausted by her recent strenuous exertions to keep afloat with so much salt water inside of her. Apparently she had made up her mind to remain where she was until a heavy blow forced her further ashore, or dragged her back into the sea that swirled about her partly submerged stern in disappointment at having lost such a delicious morsel.

"We are safe at last, Bob," grinned Singh Small. "Cheat Cap'n Green and mate Ruggles. Make 'em sweat bimeby," and his snaky eyes glittered ominously.

Bob, however, had no part in the revengeful feelings that moved the Hindu. He looked abroad at the little island on which the brig had been cast. It was scarcely more than a third of a mile long, and probably not over half that across at its widest part. In the center, on a bit of rising soil, a cluster of plantain trees reared their long, leafy heads to the breeze. There might have been a dozen of them in all, in the midst of a patch of tropical vegetation. There was nothing else on the little island but sand. Ordinarily it was not a desirable spot to be cast away upon; but any port in a storm is the mariner's adage, and Bob was grateful for that bleak patch of solid ground after his recent experiences.

He and Singh Small left the stranded brig and walked over to the plantain patch. There in the shade of their long, winging limbs they looked abroad on the water that surrounded their little foothold in every direction.

"How are we going to get away from this place?" asked Bob, as the important question presented itself to his mind.

"How?" replied the steward. "Not so hard. We build raft. No sink. Then float to bigger island, or some vessel pick us up. Begin to make it soon as have something to eat. No tell how long calm last. P'haps only day or two, maybe two weeks. Maybe not twenty-four hours. No tell anything in this latitude."

"All right," answered the boy, cheerfully. "You know more about it than I do. You've been at sea a long time, while this is my first trip."

"I been down this way six times," nodded Singh Small, checking his Caribbean trips off on his finger tips. "Bad place when wind blow heavy and kick up nasty sea. No leave anything of brig after two or three hours. S'pose she blow away, too, while we eat? Everything aboard vessel."

"We ought to bring some of the canned stuff ashore and bury it in the sand. Then if a gale comes up unexpectedly we won't starve."

"Good plan," said the steward, nodding approvingly. "We do that bimeby, if weather look bad. No waste time if not."

They returned aboard of the brig, and Bob remained on the titled deck while Singh Small got something to eat and drink for both. When they had finished their meal the steward got out a saw, hatchet, and other tools for the construction of the raft he had in view. Bob was satisfied to let the Hindu direct matters, since his nautical experience was now of great advantage to them. The brig had a couple of spare spars lashed forward, and these with Bob's help were soon cut loose and shoved overboard with a mooring rope attached to each. Two smaller spars were found secured on top of the galley-house. These were used as cross-pieces, and under the steward's direction securely lashed with stout ropes at the ends of the long ones, forming a parallelogram, the base on which the raft was to be built. Two empty water casks were lashed, one at each end of the raft, to give it buoyancy. The doors of the four staterooms were unhinged and securely nailed across the raft to form the foundation of the deck. A portion of the galley was then taken apart, and the boards thus obtained were used to raise the deck a foot above the base. By this time a pretty substantial raft had been construct-

ed, but there was still considerable work to be done on it. Singh Small, however, said it was time to knock off for dinner, and Bob was glad to quit for a while, as he was not used to laboring under a tropical sun. They did not resume work until five o'clock, when a fresh breeze sprang up and tempered the sultriness of the air. The steward dumped out the contents of the carpenter's chest, and several of the chests in the forecabin that had necessarily been abandoned by their owners when they quit the brig, and these were lashed with ropes and also nailed around the outer edges of the raft. Singh Small proposed to fill them with canned goods, and such other provisions as would not be affected by salt water. Next morning the canned provisions were taken from the Eudora's storeroom and placed in the chests on the raft. Then while the steward was putting up a kind of mast, with a cross-piece to support a small section of canvas to be used as a sail or an awning, as circumstances might dictate, Bob got a spade and started for the plantain grove to dig a shallow trench in which he intended to stow away three small boxes of canned goods in case they would be needed by anybody cast away like themselves. He selected an inviting place in the midst of the trees, and began to dig. He had turned up perhaps a dozen shovelfuls of sand when the edge of his spade struck something hard that gave out a metallic sound.

Wondering what the obstruction could be, Bob cleared away the loose sand from the top of it, and then discovered that it was a small cedar chest of ancient manufacture, clamped with iron bands, and covered with numerous iron knobs. It had evidently been a very long time hidden in the sand of the key, and looked for all the world like one of the old treasure chests of a century or two previous.

"Gee whiz!" exclaimed Bob, in some excitement. "I wonder what's in it?"

CHAPTER XVI.—The Treasure Trove.

The discovery of the iron-bound chest in the sand of the key temporarily put to flight Bob's plan of burying the three cases of canned goods.

"I wonder what's in it?" repeated Bob, half aloud, as he knelt down and with his fingers scraped the sand away from the quaint-looking, old-fashioned lock. "From its appearance it looks as if it held something of value."

Resuming work around it with his shovel, he soon had it entirely uncovered. When he tried to lift it out of its bed he found it altogether too heavy for him to move.

"I must call Singh Small," he said.

So he returned to where the steward was busily engaged upon the raft.

"See I have found something in the sand among those trees," he said to the Hindu.

"What you found?" asked the steward, pausing in his work.

"An iron-bound chest."

"I go look at it," said Singh Small.

He accompanied Bob to the spot where the chest lay. He too tested the weight of it.

"We break open and see what's inside. Maybe money," he remarked with an avaricious gleam

in his snaky eyes. "You wait here; I get some tools."

Singh Small fetched a heavy hammer and a cold chisel, with which he attacked the brass-bound lock. It seemed to defy his best efforts. Not until he smashed in the woodwork around it did he get the chest lid to open. The sight that then met their astonished eyes almost took away their breath. The chest was chock full of old-fashioned jeweled watches, small silver and gem encrusted church ornaments, numerous gold snuff-boxes and similar articles, while underneath these was a thick layer of fat-looking bags which, on investigation, proved to be full of Spanish gold pieces. Altogether, the chest held a fortune.

"You find, Bob, but me want half," said the Hindu, with gleaming eyes. "You no want all. No carry away without help. You find, me help carry away. Divide even. What you say?"

"Sure," agreed Bob, who had no objection to this arrangement, though it wouldn't have made any difference if he had kicked.

Singh Small would have taken half anyway. It is not improbable that if the Hindu had not taken a great liking for the boy that he would have rapped Bob on the head then and there with the hammer, and taken possession of the entire find.

"Looks like some piratical treasure-trove, doesn't it, Singh?" said Bob, his nerves tingling at the idea of possessing even one-half of so much wealth.

The steward agreed with him.

"We divide now. Each take half," he said.

"We can divide the money," said Bob, "but the other stuff—how can we tell its value?"

"No matter about that. You take first pick, then I take piece. That good way. Both satisfied."

Bob thought that was a good way out of the difficulty, so they proceeded to sort the different articles out as their judgment dictated. When the job was done the boy was of the opinion that he had the best of the bargain; still he could not be certain about it. Bob suggested that they each get a small box and nail the stuff up in it.

"Then when we leave the raft we can take them with us, and nobody will know what is in them," he added.

"You have good head, Bob," replied Singh Small, and the plan was accordingly carried out.

The weather continued fine, and they were ready to leave the key next morning.

"We'll take the brig's log with us," said Bob, "as evidence that we belonged to the Eudora. We must make our statement at the first port we reach that has an American consul. Could you find out the position of this key with the brig's instruments? It will be necessary that an investigation be made into the character of the Eudora's cargo in order to substantiate our charges, and bring Captain Green and his chief mate to justice."

Singh Small's nautical education, however, did not admit of his accomplishing the object aimed at by Bob.

"Unless we can determine the position of this little island it will be like looking for a needle in a haystack to find it again," said Bob, disappointedly.

"Sorry, but can't help you out," replied the steward. "All I know is that Watling's Island is no great way from here."

"But it may be north, south, east, or west from here."

"Most likely southwest or west."

"But there are lots of small islands like this one in the Bahama group, aren't there?"

Singh Small nodded.

"The sea full of little keys same as this—nobody ever stop at them."

The best that Bob could do was to draw a picture of the appearance of the key and then mark its position in connection with the brig's compass.

That showed that the island pointed northeast and southwest. It was about noon when they pushed off, with their sail set to catch the light breeze then blowing. In the course of an hour all they could see was the indistinct form of the stranded brig, and this vanished in the waste of water within the next hour. A strong breeze sprang up after sundown, and propelled the raft faster through the sea. This continued all night, but the weather dropped to a complete calm next morning, and all that day the raft lay apparently stationary upon the surface of the Caribbean Sea.

They made some progress to the southeast that night under a light wind which next morning fined down to nothing again, as another dead calm set in. That night they passed close to Mariguana—a good-sized island—without knowing it, and were floating through Caicas Passage next morning when the sun arose. The current switched them around to the north of Little Inagua Island, and on the succeeding day they caught a distant view of Great Inagua, which lies about sixty miles north of Cape Maysi, the extreme eastern point of Cuba. They kept the island in sight all day, saw several sail at a distance, but none came near enough to make them out, and once more night set in. Three days later they were abreast of Cape Maysi, about twenty miles to the east, and at the entrance to the Northwest Passage. They sailed along the passage for many days, seeing many vessels, but none close enough for them to signal. That afternoon a long, rakish-looking West Indian boat hove in sight, and was seen to be bearing down on them.

"There's a chance for us at last," said Bob, as they watched the craft coming nearer and nearer under the influence of a smacking breeze. "I'm pretty nearly sick of this old raft, which is going goodness knows where."

Singh Small grinned, for he recognized the character of the approaching boat. Two hours later, in obedience to the steward's signals, the strange craft hove to close aboard of the raft and sent a boat to them. Singh Small held a pow-wow with the black fellow in charge and learned their true position. An agreement was entered into by which the West Indian was to land them at Kingston, whither he was bound, in exchange for everything on board the craft except the contents of the two treasure boxes, the character of which the Hindu was careful to keep a profound secret. Accordingly, the native boat came alongside and the transfer was made.

CHAPTER XVII.—Conclusion.

Toward noon next day the craft entered the land-locked harbor of Kingston, for its size one of the best in the world. The steward and Bob Ford went ashore just as soon as the boat made fast to her wharf, and they secured a small native cart to carry the two heavy treasure boxes to a small inn near the water-front. Leaving the boxes in charge of the proprietor of the inn, who of course did not suspect the real nature of their contents, Bob Ford and Singh Small proceeded to the office of the American consul. Here they told the story of the loss of the Eudora and the villainy of the skipper and his chief mate—a story that seemed almost incredible to the consul. The consul accompanied them to the office of the Kingston firm to whom the Eudora was consigned, and there Bob told his story over again in almost the same words. The gentleman held a consultation as to the best thing to be done. The greatest difficulty in the way, of course, was the inability of either Bob or Singh Small to locate the little island. Finally the consul decided to pay a visit to a small American cruiser which was in the harbor, and have a conference with her captain. He did this at once, taking the boy and the Hindu with him.

The captain decided that the matter was of sufficient importance for him to cable the Navy Department for instructions. By noon next day he was ordered to proceed north and try to locate the position of the stranded brig and secure the necessary evidence of this alleged crime on the high seas. Bob and Singh Small were requested to accompany the cruiser. Before they went they deposited the treasure boxes in the Anguo-Jamaican bank for safety. The captain of the cruiser sailed to a point that corresponded to the position of the Eudora on the night she was scuttled, as entered in the log by the second mate just before the brig was discovered to be sinking. Taking this as his base, and making allowances for the presumed distance covered by the sinking craft up to sunrise next morning when she went ashore on the key, the captain began his search for the island, which Bob said could easily be identified by the presence of the stranded brig or the cluster of plantains in the center of its area. The cruiser lay to during the night after the search for the key began, so as not to pass it in the darkness, and continued her cruise with the first light of dawn. Luck assisted them, for at noon that day the island, with the wreck of the Eudora in plain view, was sighted. More than half of the auger holes completed by Ruggles were in plain view. All the holes were found and plugged securely, a cable was then stretched from the cruiser to the Eudora's stern, and she was pulled into deep water. A considerable quantity of water still remained in her hold, but it was gradually got rid of on her way back to Kingston by a careful exercise of the damaged pump. When the brig was brought up alongside a wharf and unloaded the true character of the bulk of her cargo was revealed. In the meantime it was learned that Captain Green, his officers and crew had put in at Nassau, in New Providence Island, and from there had taken passage to the United States. When

the exposure of the crime of the Eudora was made at Kingston, the papers of New York had already noted the arrival of Captain Green and survivors of the supposedly lost brig, and had printed his story, which was corroborated by all hands.

The owners presented their claims for the marine insurance, supported by the sworn statements of the officers and crew. A private dispatch detailing the true particulars of the case was sent to the Board of Marine Underwriters, and on the strength of this Captain Green, Chief Mate Ruggles and the owners of the Eudora were arrested by United States marshals and haled before the commissioner, who held them pending further developments. Bob Ford and Singh Small, together with their treasure boxes, were soon en route to New York, where they arrived a week later. Their appearance in court carried consternation to the hearts of Captain Green and Chief Mate Ruggles, while their evidence, backed up by sworn documentary proof of the character of the Eudora's cargo, as discovered at Kingston, settled the fate of all the accused, who were immediately convicted and sent to prison for a long term of years.

The Custom House had something to say about the contents of the treasure box, and levied a duty on everything but the actual money.

All told, Bob found himself worth something over \$100,000, while Singh Small's share totaled up about \$85,000. The steward decided he wouldn't go to sea any more, and as an earnest of that purpose he bought a good-sized hotel out on Long Island and established himself as the proprietor thereof. As for Bob, he couldn't get back to Factoryville any too quick, and his appearance one morning, dressed like a magnate's son, at the front door of Warren Hastings' home, caused a great sensation to the family, who had all been at sea over his unexplained disappearance. Bob found that the difficulty between the factory owners and their hands had been patched up, and that the mills were in full blast again. He also found that William Maddox and his pal, Jim Rolfe, had been convicted without his evidence, and that they had been sent to prison for some years. As Bob Ford was now worth \$100,000 at least, he was a boy entitled to some consideration, therefore when he asked Mr. Hastings if he would act as his guardian that gentleman promptly accepted the trust, and Bob was invited to become one of the family. He gladly accepted, to the great joy of both Myrtle and Edith Hastings, who regarded him as a young hero and one of the nicest boys in the world. He at once attended the Factoryville high-school. When he graduated he went to a well-known academy, and from there to Cornell University, where he eventually graduated with high honors. A month after he received his degree he was married to Myrtle Hastings, and they went to the West Indies on their bridal trip. On their return to Factoryville, Warren Hastings took Bob into his firm as a full partner, and there he is to-day, with everything at his disposal to make life worth living, a living example of a boy who was successful through thick and thin.

Next week's issue will contain "DOING HIS LEVEL BEST; or, WORKING HIS WAY UP."

CURRENT NEWS

A ONE-TON COW

A Holstein cow owned by the University of Idaho is the first cow in that State to weigh more than a ton, topping the scales at 2,015 pounds just before freshening. She produced more than twenty tons of milk in the year, the exact figure being 40,995.7 pounds.

BOY PRISONER SWIMS RIVER

Abraham Katz, seventeen, of No. 327 East Eighth Street, New York, escaped from the House of Refuge, Randall's Island, the other afternoon, swam across the East River and climbed to a pier at 116th Street. A taxicab chauffeur found him shivering on the wharf and notified Patrolman Sammons, who called an ambulance from Harlem Hospital.

After he had been attended for immersion and his clothing was dried, Katz was taken back to the institution by Chief Parole Officer Helbring. The officials of the institution refused to tell how Katz eluded the guards.

FOR FRESH DATES

Some soil in desert oases has not sufficient heat to mature dates. This is due to unusual radiation, depending upon local conditions. A way has been found to mature the fruit artificially, however, and being simple and inexpensive, it is likely to be put to practical use. A metal oven is used of the same temperature as the soil under the most favorable conditions. Here the dates are kept for three days. At the end of this time the fruit is sweet and aromatic. It is predicted that this will do away with the dried and pressed dates with which we are all familiar, as this system restores the freshness to fruit which has been too long upon the trees in the sunlight, the artificial humidity insuring juiciness and flavor. It is expected also that ultimately fruit may be exported in these ovens to long distances, although in that case a man would have to be delegated to attend the oven to register its temperature and to see that the fruit did not remain too long in it.

LOOK BOYS, LOOK!

Did you know that "Mystery Magazine" now contains more stories than it ever did? And they are crackerjacks!

Just to show you, read this list of contents for No. 156, on all newsstands:

"THE MEDICINE DROPPER"

A detective novelette by G. P. WILSON

"WITH EYES AND NOSE"

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"WHAT DOES YOUR HANDWRITING TELL?"

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TRAPS FOR THE UNWARY

An article by POLICE-CAPTAIN HOWARD

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"STICK TO YOUR PRISONER," by Jack Bechdolt; "THE STRING," by Crittenden Marriott; "THE SHADE'S MYSTERY," by Dr. W. J. Campbell; "TRAPPED BY CHANCE," by Joe Burke; "THE CAGE," by Hamilton Craigie; "THE CRIME DETECTOR," "ROBBERIES INCREASE INSURANCE RATES," "TRUTH SERUM," "MENTAL CURE FAKERS," "FIND ALLEGED SWINDLER," "JAIL PRISONERS GET NARCOTICS," "THE METHODS OF SCOTLAND YARD" and "SECRET SERVICE WARNS OF COUNTERFEITS."

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ROB AND THE REPORTERS

— Or, —

Hustling for War News by Wireless

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER III continued).

It did not seem so bad, after all, to accommodate Garvey in the way he wanted by giving him the news in advance of the other reporters, but just the same he knew he had played a double game and felt disgusted with himself.

The night wore on; the storm continued. Rob thought he had never known the wind to blow harder even in his native Newfoundland.

Shortly after midnight Mr. Finch went into another room and lay on a bed.

"If you want me call me, Rob," he said. "I'm going to take a nap."

During the next hour Rob pulled off and disposed of all sorts of exciting war news, but nothing came that seemed to render it necessary to awaken Mr. Finch.

After one there was a lull, and Rob was having difficulty in keeping awake, when all at once there came to him on the wind a startling cry: "Help! Murder! Help!"

Rob threw up a window, and as he did so the cry came again, seemingly from no great distance.

Mr. Finch came running out of the other room.

"Did you hear that?" he cried.

"I certainly did!" answered Rob.

"Are you game to take a revolver and go out and see if you can help? I'd go myself, but I'm just recovering from an attack of asthma, and I'm afraid I shall lose my wind."

"I'll go, sir!" cried Rob, "but I'm afraid it's too late."

"I'm afraid so. Here, I'll light a lantern."

He did so, and gave Rob a revolver which he took out of a drawer.

"Be careful, now," he cautioned. "I think your best hold is to cross the point. Whatever happened must have taken place on East Beach, judging from the sound."

The point was just sand and bayberry bushes, amongst which Rob cautiously made his way.

He was soon across the point, despite the fact that he had to face the wind, and he started along the beach, flashing his lantern about, until all at once he came in sight of a man lying face downward on the sand near a small hut which stood well back from the beach.

Rob hurried to him and turned him over.

He seemed quite unconscious. His face was all covered with blood, while his clothes had been half torn off him, but despite this Rob instantly recognized Harry French.

At first he thought he was dealing with a dead man, but while he was still examining him the unfortunate fellow opened his eyes, giving a low moan.

"French! What happened to you? Speak!" cried Rob.

"Oh, I have been terribly beaten," he groaned. "They tried to strangle me, too. Are they gone?"

"I have seen no one, but I heard you cry for help. Who were they? Why did they attack you?"

There was no reply. The eyes closed, and French lay still.

This time Rob was sure he was dead.

But it was only a faint, from which the poor fellow speedily revived.

Rob was now able to get his on his feet.

"Lean on me, and I'll get you over to the station," he said, kindly. "Don't try to talk now. You will only have to tell your story over again to Mr. Finch."

"Is he there to-night?" groaned French. "What will he say when he sees me like this?"

There was no smell of liquor on his breath that Rob could detect, but he assumed that Garvey had spoken the truth and that French had been drinking.

With the greatest difficulty he got him over to the wireless station, where he dropped into a chair, looking more dead than alive.

It was a relief to Rob that the manager spoke kindly to him and gave him a drink of water.

"Now then, French, what does all this mean?" he asked. "Have you been drinking?"

"No, sir! I never drink."

"I never knew you to. Explain. Who attacked you?"

"Two men. I don't know their names, but I know who put up the job on me."

"Who?"

"That scoundrel Garvey, who tried to bribe me to give him the censored news."

"Did he do that?" cried the manager, sternly.

"Yes, he did. Listen, Mr. Finch. I was on my way to work, and as usual I took the sort cut, intending to strike across the point. I was suddenly set upon by two toughs, who beat me up as you see me now and dragged me into a hut back here on East Beach. While they thought I was unconscious, they talked, and that's how I came to know that Garvey brought them from New York for the express purpose of beating me up. When they found I wasn't dead they tied me, and I remained so for hours. At last they left the hut, and I thought they had gone for good. I managed to break the cords and crawled outside, when one of them jumped on me and tried to strangle me. That was the time I called murder, hoping that Brown might hear. It may have scared them, or perhaps when I became unconscious they thought I was dead. The next I knew this young man was bending over me."

"This is certainly a terrible outrage," declared Mr. Finch. "Yet I have known Mr. Garvey for some time and find it hard to believe that he had any hand in it."

"He certainly did, sir," said Rob, in a low tone.

"Ha! What do you mean? What do you know?" cried the manager.

"Let me describe these two men," continued Rob, and he proceeded to do so.

(To be continued.)

GOOD READING

ACROSS THE CONTINENT

The completion of the first railway which made it possible to go by rail from the Atlantic to the Pacific was celebrated May 10, 1869, when a gold spike was driven in commemoration of the joining of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads at Promontory, Utah. The scene was commemorated by Bret Harte in a poem and preserved for the admiration of the future by a massive painting, which was reproduced in an engraving which had wide popularity. The similar last spike of the Northern Pacific was driven September 8, 1883, near the mouth of Gold Creek in Montana. On the earlier road the first through car from the Pacific reached New York July 24, 1870. Canada's first trans-continental road opened a generation later.

FINDS BEGGAR ASLEEP IN A ROYAL APARTMENT

The Countess Peretti de la Rocco, wife of the Director of Political Affairs of the Foreign Office, discovered a man asleep in the royal apartment in the Quai d'Orsay, which had been reserved for King Ferdinand and Queen Marie of Rumania, who are expected to arrive soon in Paris.

The Countess raised an alarm and the intruder was arrested. He confessed that he had slept in the apartment two nights. The police assert that he is a professional beggar.

The Countess, who is well known in Washington, Mexico City and Santiago, Chile, received congratulations from her friends for causing the arrest of the man.

BUSY ON SPRUCE GUM

Spruce gummers are now busy in northwest forests harvesting a unique crop worth about \$100,000. Some spruce gum diggers or pickers who are industrious and real woodsmen bring out gleanings valued at \$1,500 for six weeks' work.

To these workers gum gathering is a vacation, living in the open with wild game for food and health building hiking in the dense woods seeking the gum deposits. About three-score workers have entered the spruce timber this season, but several hundred might easily find rich territory to earn a nice piece of pin money.

A canvas pack bag, light ax and a miniature long-handed pick-ax are the tools needed. The gum nodules are often many feet above the ground, so improvised ladders are fashioned to reach the pockets. Most of the gum, however, is chipped out of cracks within easy reach. A day's work for a hustler averages 25 to 30 pounds.

INTERESTING ITEMS

India-rubber nails, for use in places where ordinary nails are liable to corrosion, are a German novelty.

The pigmy camel belongs to a species found

only in Western Persia. It is only five feet high, and snow white.

Some of the spiders found in Javanese forests spin webs so thick and strong they are like silken cords, and have to be cut with a knife.

Many years ago, in Persia, it was the custom for domestic servants to have two of their front teeth extracted. Their absence denoted servitude.

The invention of the automobile is credited to Captain Planta, a Swiss. As early as 1760 he designed and operated a road carriage which ran by steam power.

The leading wrestlers of Japan are well-formed men, of good size. With most of them wrestling is an occupation which has been handed down from father to son for many generations.

German subjects are vaccinated during the first few months of life, again on reaching the age of 12, and all males a third time on commencing their term of compulsory military service.

The bones of aged people have more lime in them than those of the young, and therefore are more brittle. This is the reason why a fall is apt to be more hurtful to an elderly person than to a young person.

Hollow concrete tile blocks will be made at Panama, and the canal commission has arranged for the erection of a plant for their manufacture. Most of the buildings in the new town of Balboa will probably be constructed of these blocks.

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INTERESTING RADIO NEWS AND HINTS

MODULATION TRANSFORMER

The microphone used for transmission in continuous wave radio telephony is generally connected to the oscillating system through the modulation transformer, which allows the continuous wave to be properly varied at voice frequencies.

MAGNIFIED SOUND

It is reported that science has found a way to make a pin drop sound like a crash. Dr. J. T. Roberts, giving a practical demonstration along with his lecture on "The Wonders of Wireless" at the Westminster Central Hall, London, used amplifiers and magnified the sound of a pin dropping to the floor so that it sounded like a crowbar striking the floor. Salt poured on the floor sounded like boulders falling.

A GOOD TESTER

Here is the easiest way to tell the positive from the negative binding post of a storage battery:

If a polarity indicator is not handy the polarity may be determined by placing the wires from the terminals of the battery in a glass of salt water. The wires should not be too close together. Bubbles will gather at the negative wire under the surface of the water.

A HOOK UP

This is the way to hook up a crystal set, using a variometer, variocoupler and a variable condenser.

The switch arms of the coupler primary should be connected in series with the aerial and ground. The variometer is connected in series with the secondary of the variocoupler and the variable condenser so that it is in shunt across both of them. The crystal and phone condenser form the detecting circuit which are in series, and then connected to the terminals of the variable condenser. The telephones are connected across the terminals of the phone condenser. The condenser need not have a high capacity; .00025 mfd. being large enough.

BALL TYPE VARIOMETER

This is a ball shaped tuning apparatus consisting of a fixed or stationary outer winding and a concentrically mounted inner movable winding. The two windings are connected in series and may be mounted on molded insulation or wood. They are usually wound with the same number of turns of the same wire. Variometers may be obtained with sufficient winding to cover a wave length of from 150 to 600 meters using the average antenna. The variometer is well adapted as a tuning device for receiving circuits. By placing it in series in the antenna circuit and revolving the ball or inner winding the inductance of the winding can be varied at will. The variometer can also be used as a direct coupled tuning transformer. When used in this connection the variometer is connected in series with the aerial and the ground while a variable con-

denser and the crystal detector are shunted around it. This circuit is well adapted for short wave work.

WIRE FOR COILS

Three governing factors in the selection of wire for coils are resistance, insulation and surface. If the wire is too small, resistance will impede the current flow. High-frequency currents travel over the surface of a conductor and not within it. The greater the surface the easier it is for the currents to pass. No. 18 and No. 22 wire are generally recommended for use as primary coils because of their surface and low resistance. No. 24 and No. 26 wire serve well as secondary windings.

Theoretically, stranded wire, such as Litzendraht, is more suitable than solid wire, but the difference in the results in receiving broadcasting stations does not warrant the additional expense. Litzendraht is to be recommended for loop antennae and coils for high wave length reception because of its larger surface.

Single cotton covered, silk covered or enameled wire works well for windings of the ordinary coils. Double covered wire should be used for spiderweb and honey-comb coils and bank windings. Defects in thin insulation when it is stretched and twisted in the winding process are likely to cause short circuits. Shellac should not be used to cover the windings as a protection from moisture. Paint or dip the coils in colodion. Shellac increases the capacity effect.

VARIOMETERS AND VARIABLE CONDENSERS

A variometer is a tuning device similar in many ways to the variocoupler, but differing from it in the relation of outer and inner coils, which are connected to form a continuous wire. The variometer finds its greatest application in the two variometer and coupler feedback set. The variometer consists of a set of fixed windings and a set of movable windings, the latter being rotated on an axis in the usual fashion. This instrument varies the inductance and therefore the wave length of any circuit in which it is used.

When coils are tuned so that the currents flow in both coils in opposite directions the coils buck each other and the inductance and wave length at a minimum.

A variable condenser across the secondary of the variocoupler of a receiver serves to add capacity to the circuit and permits a finer degree of tuning in the secondary circuit than could be obtained merely by varying the value of the inductance of the coupling.

A buzzer of the ordinary house type with battery connected in series with the condenser would indicate if any part of the condenser is short circuited. If the condenser is short-circuited the buzzer will buzz as long as the circuit is kept closed. This proves that the plates of the condenser are shorted at some point.

TUNING COILS

Beginning with the simplest ones and working up to and including the best types, coils are: Single slide, double slide, loose coupler, vario-coupler, variometer, honeycomb, duo lateral and some special types, depending upon the circuit employed.

The single slide tuning coil consists of a cardboard tube measuring four inches in diameter wound with fifty turns of No. 22 wire spaced closely together. One end of this coil is connected to the aerial and the other end to the ground. The slider, a contact that slides across the surface of the wires on a path scraped bare though the insulation is connected to the detector and the lower end of the coil. Connect the other end of the detector to the ground wire.

To tune a set having a loose coupler as tuning device set the coupling as tight as possible and tune in the desired signal with the primary coil. After this has been done tune in with the secondary or inner coil until the greatest signal strength has been reached. An attempt now can be made to loosen the coupling somewhat until the signals are just audible. Retune the set with the primary coil or taps until the loudest signal has been heard with the present setting or coupling. This will bring in less interference from neighboring stations.

The set must be adjusted to be in resonance with the transmitter so that the wave lengths of both stations are the same. In order to change the characteristics of a receiver to pick up respective wave lengths a system of tuning must be operated at each receiver.

A tuning coil is a length of copper wire wound around an insulated tube made either with pasteboard, bakelite, mormica, hard rubber or fiber. The wire used is generally copper. The length of the wire depends on the number of turns required and the diameter of the coil.

RECEIVING SET CAN BE ALTERED

To cater to the whims of the radio experimenter and his eternal seeking after new circuits and combinations of circuits, a well-known manufacturer has developed an outfit with parts so arranged that the connections may be instantly changed from one arrangements to another to construct any form of receiving and detecting unit.

The heart of the receiver is an all-wave tuner designed with a sufficient number of turns of wire to reach any wave from 150 to 1,000 meters. With such a set it is possible to tune in amateur stations with their range of 150 to 250 meters, broadcast stations with their range limits of 236 to 536 meters or commercial and compass stations with frequencies equivalent to wave lengths between 450 and 1,000 metres.

To construct a set of this type the following parts are necessary: An all-wave coupler, a 23 plate variable condenser, socket and rheostat, dials, terminals, connecting wire and binding posts.

It is an "all purpose" combination of standard units, which by the mere rearrangement of jumpers from one contact to another may be made into a single tube, single circuit set, with varying volume such, as regenerative or non-regenerative and by the addition of a two-stage

amplifier it can be made into a loud speaking set. Furthermore, it may be changed to any number of known circuits as well as enabling the "experimenter" to try any new circuit that he may conceive by merely making the changes at the top of the inside panel. No soldering iron or tools of any kind are required.

The "terminals," which simplify the interchange of connections, are binding posts. By shifting the "jumpers," which are merely loops of wire of varying lengths, from one set of terminals to another the functions of the circuits may be altered at will.

LACK OF APPLAUSE IN RADIO

The scanty article which is proving more than performers can stand is applause.

If an artist exhibited his or her ability over the microphone in 1922 the mails and telegraph lines were crowded with fervent pronouncements of appreciation from all points of the globe within 1,000 miles from the station. The artists felt that the applause, while not spontaneous, was nevertheless genuine and represented the real feelings of the listeners.

Now there is keener competition between the leading broadcast stations and the fans seem to sense the fact. Instead of showing their appreciation in some material form such as by phone calls or letters they merely assume that some one else will perform the courtesy. In former times it was said that the appearance of certain individuals or the program seemed to be the signal for an avalanche of mail, the letters sometimes aggregating 1,000 or more within twenty-four hours. Nowadays the artist considers himself or herself fortunate if the response reached a total of 100.

Added to this reluctance on the part of the audience is the reaction of some of the organizations with which artists are affiliated. While the personal movements of their members cannot be controlled, these organizations are frowning on the appearance of the members on the radio programs without payment for their services. Just how far this indirect consorship will affect the programs is not known, but it is generally understood that many of the artists care more for the widespread publicity which they receive than for the financial recompense which might be there.

As an artificial stimulation some enterprising firms have devised applause cards with sentiments expressed in blank form. It was hoped that listeners having a supply of these cards would indicate their thoughts on the blank spaces and mail them to the broadcast station after the conclusion of each program. But this method of applauding artists lacks a "kick." Unless the statement of appreciation comes from the heart the words are as lifeless as the usual message on a picture postcard. The artist feels the lack of spontaneity even though several hundred of the cards pour in.

Just where the solution lies has not been indicated by any of those who discuss the problem. The artists must have more applause if they are to continue to perform without charge. The stations would like to see the increase, too, because it would make the arrangements of programs easier.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, MAY 2, 1924

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

FIND SKULL OF RACE ANTEDATING INDIANS

Excavators employed by a construction concern several days ago unearthed a human skull near Los Angeles, Cal., which visiting paleontologists, including Dr. J. C. Merriam, President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, said they believed to be a relic of a race older than either the Neanderthal or the Piltdown man.

The skull is said by scientists who examined it to be different in appearance from the skulls of the typical aborigine of North America, examples of which have recently been found in Southern California. It is not of the Indian type. It was found in glacial sands beneath pleistocene clay strata, in the valley which a few years ago gave up fragments of the skeletons of the giant sloth and the saber-toothed tiger.

The skull in being removed was broken into fragments, but these have been pieced together.

ATLANTIC CITY LIFTS BAN ON 1-PIECE BATHING SUIT

Although bare legs were banned for women bathers in Atlantic City last summer, Mayor Edward L. Bader officially announced that during the coming season complete equality of the sexes would prevail on the beaches of this resort. Use of the one-piece bathing suit, with skirt, and no stockings, may be considered regulation attire.

Mayor Bader supplemented his decree by being photographed standing between two young women in the approved swimming habiliments. Their costumes he described as both modest and giving complete freedom of action in the water.

Specifically, the regulations call for the bottom of the tights to be no shorter than four inches above the knee and the bottom of the skirt to be not higher than seven inches above the knee. On the way to and from the beaches, all bathers, men and women, must wear a covering extending from the shoulders to below the knees.

ABOUT CINNAMON

The finest cinnamon bark is produced in Ceylon, where the Portuguese found the tree growing wild when they arrived in the island in 1505, says the *Bulletin* of the Imperial Institute. Since that date Ceylon has been famed for this spice, but owing to the small financial return it gives to the growers, much of the area under cinnamon in the island has been replaced by the more profitable coconut and rubber. Ceylon cinnamon, moreover, has had to compete, particularly in the Continental markets, with a cheaper product of coarser flavor from the Far East. Cinnamon bark reaches us in two forms: the ordinary "quills," used as spice, and "chips," which are distilled for the production of cinnamon oil used in medicine. The leaves of the cinnamon tree yield an entirely different oil from that of the bark; this oil contains eugenol (the characteristic constituent of oil of cloves) which is employed in the manufacture of vanillin, the well-known flavoring agent. Cinnamon-leaf oil is produced largely in the Seychelles, in addition to the Ceylon crop.

LAUGHS

"Our cook gives us the same thing at every meal." "What does she give you?" "Indigestion."

Photographer—Look pleasant, please. Victim—I guess you'll have to move that "Terms Cash" sign.

She—Do you like me for myself alone? He—Yes, and when we are married I don't want any of the family thrown in.

Mr. Gayman (laying the paper aside)—Well, there's no fool like an old fool. Mrs. Gayman—what particular folly are you meditating now?

Applicant—I see you advertised for a floor-walker, sir. Manager—Yes. Have you any experience in that line? Applicant—Two pairs of twins, sir.

Facetious Traveler (poking his head out of the car window)—What place is this? Native (leaning against the depot)—Paradise, Kaintucky, suh. Facetious Traveler—It is, eh? Well, this is how far from where? Native—Half a mile from the distillery, suh.

Little 'Rastus came home from school one day and asked: "I say, paw, why does they allus put D. C. after Washington?" "Why, chile," replied the old colored man, "I's surprised at yer ignorance. Doan yer know dat D. C. means dat Washington wuz de daddy ob his country?"

Once a genial comedian consulted an oculist about his eyes. His nose was small and he couldn't keep on the glasses with which the oculist was trying to fit him. "You are not used to glasses, Mr. Blank," said the oculist. "Oh, yes, I am," replied the comedian, "but not so high up."

BRIEF BUT POINTED

SUPERSTITIOUS ABOUT TOADS

The toad is not an attractive animal and it has always been the object of curious beliefs or superstitions. Small boys believe that if one is killed and turned on its back there will be rain before night. For ages the general public has held to the belief that warts were produced by handling toads. Other traditions credit the toad with the power of poisoning infants with its breath; of bringing good fortune to the house in the new-made cellar of which one is found; of curing infants of stammering if rubbed on the back of the neck; and of causing a cow to dry or give bloody milk if she accidentally kills a toad while being driven home from pasture. The works of the early writers on natural history team with vague unsubstantiated accounts of the venomous qualities of the breath and sputum of the toad, the medical value of toad skins for treating ailments, and the valuable toadstone found in its head.

SHIP SAILS WITH HOATZIN HUNTERS

Equipped with every device to combat the hardships of travel in the Valley of the Amazon, a band of ornithologists recently sailed from Brooklyn on the Booth liner *Stephens* in quest of the hoatzin, a rare bird of the Amazon.

The hoatzin is a bird with a bill capable of breaking stone. It also swims and is able to lose its bird identity, as the bat does.

Leading the expedition, which is independently financed, are R. M. Deschuenessee, son of the Baroness Deschuenessee, of Philadelphia, an ornithologist; George Coudert, motion picture photographer, and Prof. Joseph McGoldrick and Henry Norris, of the University of Pennsylvania.

The boat, which was chartered from the Booth Steamship Company, is equipped with radio, and special compartments for the birds. It will dock at Para, and proceed up the Amazon to Mananas, which was Theodore Roosevelt's jumping-off place when he hunted in South America for big game.

From there the adventurers will penetrate country never traversed by white men.

They will thence go overland through country inhabited by half-civilized tribes until they reach the Peruvian border, emerging into that country at Oquitz. They expect to capture there the hoatzin, valued at \$50,000.

Professor McGoldrick said:

"I know that the poor hoatzin must feel bad about putting us to all this trouble, but I want to say this much for the bird, that it is not all its fault. Take, for instance, the umbrella bird, so-called because its hood is shaped like an umbrella, and the singing bell bird.

"We surely thought that this bird was a second Caruso. The bell bird can be heard for three miles, and is just as much to blame as the poor hoatzin."

So confident are the adventurers of capturing the hoatzin that they are carrying the bird's special food.

THE ASSASSIN OF THE DEEP

The real "back-biter" of the sea is the Ray, which is not nearly as pleasant an individual as its name might indicate.

The Ray is a veritable "gossip," and of the most virulent type. Its size varies from an inconspicuous length of a few inches to the Giant Rays which have been discovered weighing as much as two tons.

The Ray is a deep sea monster and it moves slowly along the muddy channels of the sea. It is easily hidden because of the marvelous color adaptation it has developed with regard to its surroundings. But once let this creature be attacked by an enemy, or let the Ray itself decide to go out on its own account for a victim, then the doom of death will fall upon the poor unsuspecting sea citizen that gets in its way.

The Ray does not use its tongue for vengeance. It uses a deadly sword that punctures the body of its opponent and into this puncture it pours a poison that is fatal. For this reason it can rightly be described as the "back-biter" of the sea.

This sword or dagger is carried by the Ray at the end of its whip-like tail and when infuriated this monster fish will lash this tail in all directions, wreaking death on all who come within its radius.

A hunter of this strange creature was stung in the leg by a small Ray and for weeks half his body was paralyzed. Rays have been known to kill men as well as sea creatures.

The "dagger" Rays are strange, but the electric Rays are even stranger. These fish can stun a man with an electric shock. It can not only stun its enemies, but kill them as well, for it has developed from its muscles electric cells. It can perform the functions which are performed by an electric spark, such as decompose water and chemical compounds. This fish is capable of producing an electric spark. A man will be sick for days following if he has been stunned by one of these fishes and if he completes the circuit by touching the fish with both hands he will be killed.

It is maintained by experts in marine navigation that the monsters of the sea are far larger and more dangerous to hunt than are the monsters of the land. This seems not so surprising when it is considered that on land man and his inventions of slaughter for animals have been aiding in the extermination of dangerous animals, whereas in the sea there is no mechanical or artificial device greatly developed to kill off the dangerous inhabitants.

From time to time the immense body of some sea monster is found floating on the surface of the sea or is discovered water-logged on some shore, and then man becomes cognizant of the strange creatures that live beneath the waves. But this vast realm of Nature is almost unexplored and science will continue to gradually reveal amazing submarine wonders.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

BURIED TO EYES IN SAND, WORKER DEMANDS SMOKE

Buried to his eyes by sand when the walls of a ditch caved in, Michael McGee, laborer on a plumbing job at 165 Sheffield avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y., smoked cigarettes and joked while firemen worked four hours to dig him out. The ditch was eight feet deep and only the top of McGee's head was visible when workmen started to remove the sand. When he cleared his mouth of sand McGee demanded a cigarette.

"Take me out in once piece," he asked of the workmen.

Freed from the sand he was attended by a physician, after which he said he would be back at work in the same ditch.

MAKES NEW KIND OF GLASS

A new kind of glass, which, if not actually unbreakable, is so tough that it has been blown into a hollow sphere and kicked about as a football without breaking, has been discovered by Dr. Horak, a Czech engineer and inventor.

When used in the form of tumblers the glass has successfully withstood the squirt of cold water immediately after being heated to a point where pieces of paper in the tumbler were charred. While the inventor does not claim that he has found the secret of unbreakable glass, he does believe he has found a way to make it possess the greatest resistance power of any glass so far known. It is admirably suited to the making of thermos bottles, which in so many cases have been too fragile.—Scientific American.

CANNED MILK INVENTOR, DEAD, WORTH MILLIONS

The romance of opportunity never has had a more striking example than in the case of Louis F. Latzer, President of the Helvetia Milk Condensing Company, whose funeral was held recently at Highland, Ill.

Latzer, son of a poor Tyrolese immigrant who settled at Highland in 1846, was born Dec. 10, 1848, on the farm where he dropped dead.

Until thirty-seven years old he was a farm hand. He died worth between \$12,000,000 and \$20,000,000. And he made it all himself.

In 1885 there drifted into Highland a man, John Mysenburg, with an idea to can milk. He interested five farmers, among them Latzer. The company lost all it invested.

Latzer at the age of forty went to college, studied chemistry, bacteriology and related subjects and finally hit upon the process of evaporation in vacuum.

Employees were paid in stock and the latter was hawked around the grocery and butcher shops of Highland as low as \$12 for \$100 shares.

That same stock is now unobtainable at \$20,000 a share. The last transaction in it was last October, when Mrs. Louisa Wild, widow of one of the founders, sold her 176 shares to other stockholders for \$3,520,000. For years it has paid annual dividends of \$1,000 or more a share.

Latzer's wealth did not change him. His family rode in automobiles, but he always took his trips of short distance on horseback, trousers tucked into old-fashioned boots. His office furniture consisted of three solid wood kitchen chairs, a pine table and a rack of pigeon-holes.

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morrow. Not next week or next month, but to-night.

“The sooner I send it in, the sooner I’ll be promoted like Tom.”

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The bird was captured for examination and the physician expressed the opinion that the sea gull would probably die from blood poisoning if an attempt were made to remove the wooden shaft. It is probable, old timers on the pier declared, that the gull, a clumsy, awkward bird, had collided with a splintered board while attempting to land on some old pier or shed along the water front and, after being wounded, had stowed itself away to nurse its injuries.

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